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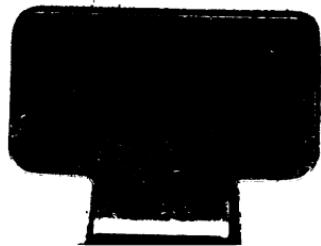
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# RELIGIOUS STUDIES FOR LAYMEN

STUDIES IN THEOLOGY

BY

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Eastport, Maine

LECTURES I-XIII

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## PREFACE

The purpose of these lectures is to present in a form which will be acceptable to the layman a systematic and constructive outline of such subjects as are usually taken up in textbooks on Theology. There is a mass of theological and other closely related material not now accessible to the layman. It is my belief that the adult members of our Churches and Societies ought to have access to this fund of knowledge. Therefore, the attempt is made in these lectures to present in language that can be understood by the average individual the facts and the results of modern study.

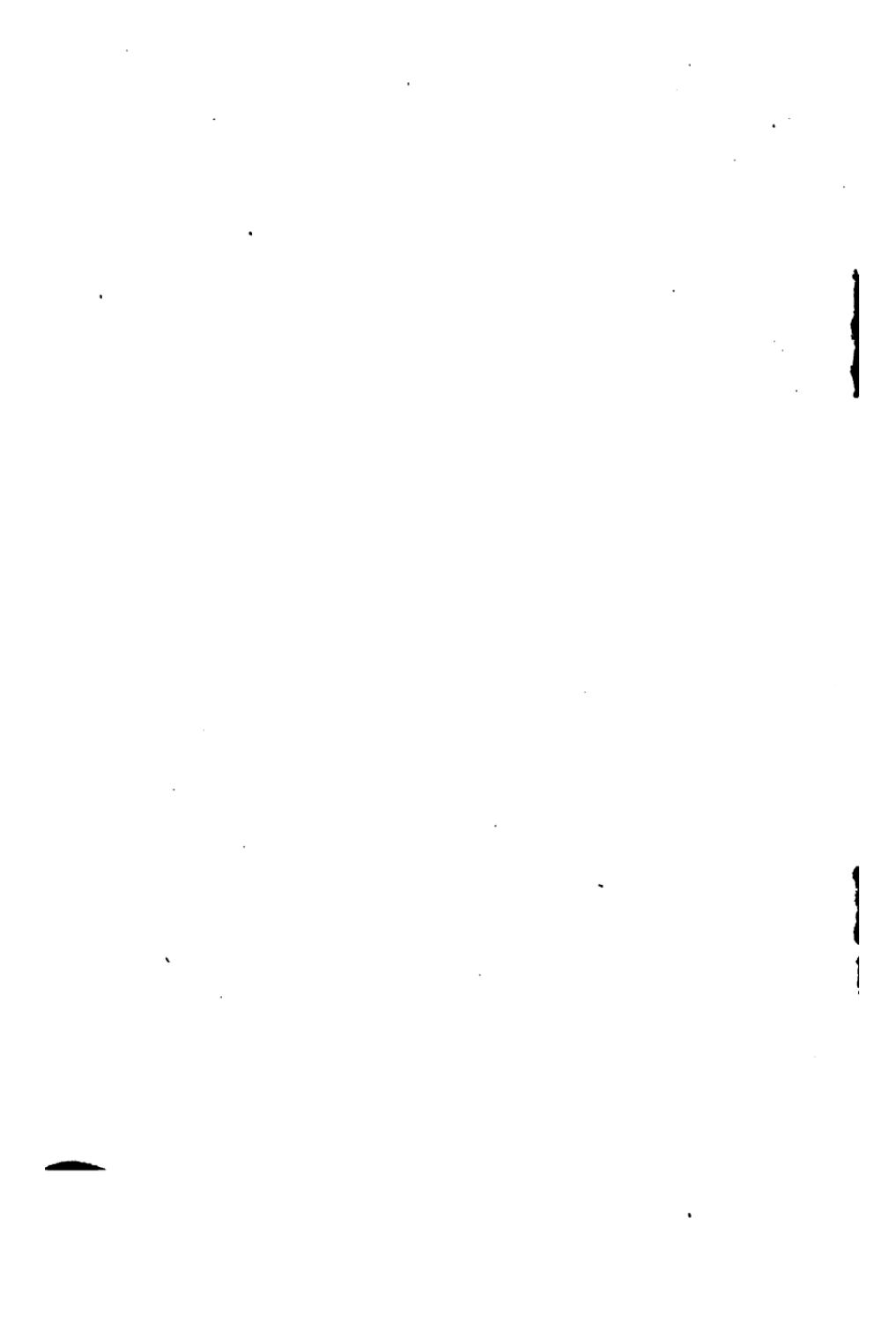
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I do not doubt that many facts which hitherto have been unknown to many laymen will be presented. The aim is always to find the truth, and then to build upon it. I can see no reason why the privileged few should be the only persons to have access to these facts. Therefore, the present work is not primarily an attempt to make a new contribution to knowledge. It is merely an attempt to present in clear and concise form what hitherto has been available only to the scholar.

These lectures were first prepared for an adult Bible study class connected with my own parish. I hope other pastors and leaders of Bible study classes will find them useful. The lectures are also recommended to Young Men's Christian Associations, Literary Clubs, and so forth. In these and other ways I hope the lectures will find a place and fill a need. The greatest reward of my labor will be to know that this modest effort assists the layman in his private study.

C. E. B.

Eastport, Maine, March, 1911.

EWB



## LECTURE I

### THE CREATION OF THE PHYSICAL WORLD

I. THE FACT OF THE CREATION.—Our first knowledge of the world comes to us through the senses. We receive impressions by means of the sense organs, and then construct in terms of thought an idea of the outer world. The next step is to inquire how the world came into existence. There have been several answers to that question. Some have said there was no outside world. What seems so to us is only our thought that it exists. Others have said the outside world is real. If so, the question arises as to the manner of its creation. Was there a time when matter did not exist? Was it made out of nothing? Did it form by chance? Has the Universe been created by an Intelligent Being? To account for the creation, myths have arisen, the forces of nature have been personified, and the world has been peopled with good and evil spirits. All religions have creation stories, and account for the fact of the creation by saying it was caused by the gods or a Superior Being. Thus there is substantial agreement as to the fact. The impressions received from the outer world lead men everywhere to look from nature to a God of nature.

II. THEORIES AS TO THE METHOD OF CREATION.—It is important to distinguish carefully between the fact of the creation and the method of it. The question now to be considered is as to the method.

1. *Theories as to the Origin of Matter.*—There are two possible views as to the origin of matter. The first is that matter was made out of nothing. There was a time when matter did not exist. It has been claimed that God need not have created the world, and that when he did he might have made a different kind of world had he so decided. Such a created world, then, would have no necessary connection with the past eternity of God. It would be something entirely new, not being formed from any previously existing thing. God would create it and set it to run its course much as a man would make a clock. When there was need of it God might suspend a natural law or perform a miracle. Otherwise such a physical world must run its course until it ran down and the whole created physical universe became a cold lifeless mass. The difficulty with this view is that it places God too far from the world. If a world could suddenly be created from nothing once, it could be done again. Such a thing is unthinkable, for the very term "Universe" implies there can be nothing outside of it. There is one thing God cannot do. He cannot create a world independent of himself. The processes of creation must, therefore, be a movement within God. The creation cannot have come out of nothing.

The second view is that matter is a physical form of something not material. Matter as we know it, exists in three forms, solid, liquid and vapor. These differences in form are not absolute. Iron can be heated until it becomes a liquid. Air can be compressed and frozen until it becomes a solid. Matter changes its form. But is matter itself a changing form of something else? If so, there was a time when matter as we know it did not exist. From a scientific point of view every physical

event has a preceding physical cause. There is a cause for the exact position of every grain of sand. All physical changes are but passing phases of one physical energy. Matter changes only its form. The amount of energy in the universe remains the same forever. Matter as we know it may be a temporal and passing form of an Eternal Energy, and matter itself may finally vanish away and not be, even as it was not before God created it. Otherwise we must think of matter as eternal. Matter is either eternal or it is a passing form of divine creative activity. In either case God is the Eternal Energy that sustains and controls all.

2. *The Theory of Special Creation.*—The first chapters of Genesis describe the appearance of different orders of created things on successive creative days. The question arises whether these "days of creation" were short or long periods of time, and whether in the process of creation each order of things appeared suddenly, independently and fully matured, or through a gradual process of development. The theory of special creation holds that each thing was created separately by a direct special creative act. According to this view God created all things according to type forever unchangeable and incapable of any further physical development beyond that involved in the perpetuation of the species. After God had thus created all things the work of creation ceased.

3. *The Theory of Evolution.*—What is known as "the theory of evolution" is advanced by modern science to explain the method of creation. The term is applied usually to the development of life. Yet in a broader sense the whole physical world is in a process of evolution. The physical world is evolving. Astronomers believe

there was a time when our world was a hot molten mass of material drawn together by gravitation. This mass gradually cooled. An atmosphere was formed. Rains began to fall. Land appeared. In due time when the climate had become stable, life appeared. Thus the world is running its course. Other planets have gone through similar evolutions already, and now are cold and motionless and lifeless. So will our earth run down, for all the physical world is in process of change.

The theory of evolution applies especially to the development of life. There are three theories as to the origin of life; there was life in the original matter of which the earth was made; life was brought here from some other planet; living matter originated spontaneously from the non-living. The first two are inconceivable. The third, while not impossible, reduces life to physical and chemical processes. We cannot ignore any physical aspects or possibilities in accounting for the origin of life, but after all we must confess as most leading scientists do that we cannot lift that veil. The theory of evolution accepts as its working principle the belief that all forms of life are related. From an original simple form through long processes of evolution the present complexity has resulted. Creation, then, has been a slow process of gradual development which has not yet ceased.

**III. THE PROOF OF EVOLUTION.**—The ancient Greeks believed in evolution as the method of creation. The idea was also accepted by early Churchmen and by the philosophers of the Middle Ages. The theory is now the basis of modern science, and is increasingly accepted everywhere. The proof of evolution, then, is a scientific question.

1. *Observations Proving Evolution.*—Geologists have found many fossils in the strata of the earth. It has been observed that fossils of the simpler forms of life are always found in the oldest strata, while the more complex are always found in strata of later formation. From these remains it is possible in some cases to trace the development of a species. For instance, in some very old deposits, fossils of a small animal about the size of a fox and with five toes have been found. There are also fossils of this same animal as it developed in later geological periods. We can trace clearly the line of development from this small animal with five toes to the modern horse. What has taken place in the case of the horse has taken place in the evolution of other forms of life. Similarities of structure also show definite relationship between different species. For instance, a comparison of the skeletons of Man, Orang, Gibbon, Chimpanzee and Gorilla shows similarity of structure. It is, therefore, scientifically logical to assume there is some anatomical connection. Besides this there are biological facts concerning the development of each individual which prove beyond question the ancestry of the species. In his development the individual quickly repeats the history of the race. Rudimentary organs and "reversion to type" are further convincing proofs. Scientific observations in both the animal and vegetable world show how all forms of life may have developed from earlier simpler forms. However, the supreme proof of evolution is to be found in what we may observe right around us all the time. There is development everywhere. The theory of evolution is but an attempt to apply to the entire history of the world what we can observe at any time in the growth of a single individual.

2. *Experiments Proving Evolution.*—Man by imitating nature has been able to secure some wonderful results in the production of domestic animals and cultivated plants. One illustration of this is seen in the development of so many varieties of pigeons from a single type of wild pigeon. A similar thing is observed in the development of so many new types of garden vegetables from the same original seed. Through intelligent processes of selection man can preserve and develop for human use what otherwise might be lost. Many illustrations of this kind of work are too well known to be spoken of here. Now nature on a large scale does what men are doing. Nature "selects." There is a law of "the survival of the fittest." Man's control over nature is limited, but God can intelligently control the course of this evolution.

3. *Conclusions Regarding Evolution.*—The theory of evolution is an attempt on the part of science to describe the method of creation. Science has a right to study the processes by which life develops now, and to make further observations and experiments in order to find out all the facts possible concerning life both in its origin and development. At the present time the conclusion of science is that given previous life there are certain forces at work in nature by which gradual changes are brought about. These changes in times past have given rise to many variations. So far as these have survived new types have been established. So far as the same conditions exist now the process is going on still. In this sense the creation is never finished. The theory of evolution is the clearest theory that has ever been advanced to explain the phenomena we observe in the world. All questions are not settled at once. No

proof of evolution can be fully convincing; yet it should be remembered that all scientific observations and experiments tend to support the theory in principle, even if all the details cannot be worked out satisfactorily at the present state of our knowledge. So in its fundamental principle we need not hesitate to commit ourselves to this theory as the most satisfactory one yet advanced to explain the method of God's creative activity.

**IV. THE RELATION OF EVOLUTION TO THE BIBLICAL ACCOUNT.**—The Bible is not an authority in scientific matters. The Hebrews thought of the world as a floating disc in a great sea. An unknown deep was beneath the earth. Above it the firmament stood like a large dome, and above that were waters that communicated with the larger unknown sea in which the earth floated. The Genesis account of creation so closely resembles the Babylonian that it is impossible not to regard them as having a common source. The difference in presentation and value is in the religious point of view adopted. The Hebrew writer interpreted from the standpoint of belief in one God what the Babylonians and other nations explained from the standpoint of belief in many gods. Thus the Jehovah of the Hebrews created a world which could be pronounced very good. The religious authority of such a view can never be shaken.

There are two distinct accounts of creation in Genesis. The first extends from the first verse of the first chapter to the fourth verse of the second chapter. In some respects that section approaches scientific accuracy. The second account comprises three verses from the fourth to the seventh of the second chapter. It is not so clear in detail as the first account. It is evident that in the

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attempt to describe the method of creation the author of Genesis was much more limited in knowledge than we are. To us has been granted a point of view from which to read God's thoughts after him concerning the method of creation not granted to the author of these sections. He discusses a far more important question, and that is the spiritual one. Science may occupy a rightful place as the handmaid of religion. It may investigate freely in its own field. However, when we pass from the method to the fact, the Biblical account will stand forever. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." From that fact there can be no appeal.

## LECTURE II

## THE CREATION OF MAN

I. THE PHYSICAL LIFE.—1. *The Method of Man's Creation.*—There are two theories as to the method of man's creation. The first is the theory of special creation. The second is the theory of evolution. According to the first view man appeared on the earth after God had finished all the rest of creation. Man's body was made of the dust of the earth. God also breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul. The Biblical account gives us the picture of two individuals possessing superior intellectual capacity, and living, at the first, in fellowship with God. This account emphasizes the differences between man and the world into which he came. A single truth is taught. Man was created a child of God, and made in God's image. Beyond this no questions are raised.

According to the theory of evolution man is a part of nature. His physical being has a definite relation to all other physical life. Science takes the ground that man's body has gradually developed from other forms of animal life. The probable course of this development is shown by actual remains of early man, by inferences as to man's early history, by a study of the lowest types of human life to-day, and by facts of physiology and biology. Thus the conclusion is reached that physically man is a part of nature.

2. *The Character of Early Man.*—It is not logical to assume in every case that the lowest known races to-day most closely resemble early man. However, the gulf between savage and civilized man in some ways is greater than between the savage and some lower forms of life. If the physical differences observed in human races to-day may be accounted for on a theory of evolution from a single original stock, it is not incredible that the first men were but a branch of a still lower stock. The same forces that have accomplished the former could accomplish the latter. In 1892 Dr. Dubois discovered in Java the bones of a creature having a skull capacity intermediate between man and the anthropoid apes. There are some who regard this as the "missing link" between man and the lower forms of life through which the line of human evolution came. Previous to the discovery of this skull of Java, the Neanderthal skull had been unearthed in 1857. In 1886 two skeletons were found deeply buried in undisturbed strata in Belgium. Flint tools were also found. A careful comparison of several skulls shows differences in type already appearing in those pre-historic times. We have here evidences which go to show how early man stood on the physical borderland between humanity and animality.

We have no means of knowing how long men have inhabited the earth. Perhaps we would hesitate to call the half-ape and half-man being that inhabited Java before or during the glacial period a man; but if we say that that being possessed power to think, it follows that man probably first appeared on the earth in that section of the world perhaps some one hundred thousand years ago. When, however, we find stone tools in strata going back to glacial geological periods it is evident that man

must have been on the earth then. It is impossible to say anything definite. There was a long period of prehistoric development back of the earliest civilizations. The idea has been advanced that the account of the flood is really the story of the melting of the ice-sheet at the breaking up of the glacial period. All nations have some myth or tradition concerning the flood. There must be some fact back of it. Our earliest historical date goes back nearly to five thousand years before Christ. We know there were well developed civilizations long before that time. Civilized man has been on the earth certainly since 10,000 B. C., and probably for a much longer period.

3. *Conclusions Concerning the Physical Life.*—From the physical side man is a part of nature. His body is the culmination of a long process of evolution. With the brute creation man shares in all physical necessities. His physical wants must be supplied. In everything he must recognize his physical dependence. His birth, development and death are predetermined in his physical constitution. Thus man has a kinship with nature, but he is more than a child of nature.

II. THE MENTAL LIFE.—1. *Suggestions of Intellect in Animals.*—There are suggestions of intellect in many forms of lower animal life. The ant defending its home, the spider building its web, the bird building its nest, the squirrel laying in its winter store, and many similar things suggest the power of reason. However, this is instinct and not conscious thought. In some animals like the dog and horse there seems to be something akin to conscience; but such a conscience is largely the result of fear. In some cases animals can be trained; then they will repeat automatically the things they have

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learned, and imitate their own successful action. It is yet to be shown that an animal can face a distinctly new situation and solve it at once. Until an animal shows definite reasoning powers in facing a new situation it can never be admitted that it is itself conscious of possessing mental powers. To become conscious of such a power would to all intents and purposes make it equal to man. As far as we can judge man alone has emerged from the animal creation to conscious thought, feeling and action. More than this it is not likely that any other creature will acquire that power. However, we must always remember that we cannot fully understand many human characteristics without studying the same and similar traits in lower forms of life. There we find suggestions of that marvelous development about to take place when human consciousness first appeared on the earth.

2. *The Dawn of Human Thought*.—There are instincts which man shares with the brute creation, and there are mental experiences which are peculiar to man. There came a time when something took place which forever separated man from every other creature. That was the moment when man first consciously looked out upon the world and in upon himself. This power of thought first appeared in man when he became aware of his own distinct existence. Then he became a thinking being living in the midst of unthinking creatures. When man gained that power of thought his ultimate dominion over nature became inevitable. Early man was greatly handicapped by ignorance and inexperience. He even had a hard fight for life itself. Man's control over natural forces has been acquired very gradually. It is not yet complete.

Man has been called "the thinking animal." The

power of thought, however, makes man more than an animal. The mark of manhood is the power consciously to think. A man is aware of the fact that he is an "I." This awareness of personal existence dawns first in the child's mind when the personal pronoun is used. A person is a being who is able consciously to think. Human personality develops through childhood, youth, maturity and age. In the vigor of maturity man is more conscious of the meaning of his personal existence than at any other time. As long as the power consciously to think, feel and act continues, man is a personal being. That is the supreme mark of manhood.

3. *The Nature of the Mental Life.*—The mental life may be described but not defined. Men are conscious of being individual thinking beings. The mind is aware of a world without and of itself within. There are certain well defined mental laws. Psychology is the science which investigates the ways in which the mind acts. The question may be asked whether the mental development corresponds to the physical evolution. It has, for as man's physical life has developed so has his mental life. Yet no one has ever written a book explaining the mental development. That is evolution of a type higher than the physical.

It is possible to take the position that there is no connection between the body and the mind. The two may be considered as distinct, though perhaps running parallel to each other. Science adopts the position that there is no mental action without a corresponding action in the brain or nervous system. There are three possible views concerning the relation between the body and mind: the first is that the thought is a product of the brain, a sort of brain secretion; the next is that the

body and the mind interact so that a physical impulse may result in a mental experience or vice versa; while the third position is that the mind is the all important, and the brain and the body servants of it. Whatever may be the final answer to the question as to the relation between body and mind, it is certain that so far as our present experience goes "we have this treasure in earthen vessels." We know of no consciousness apart from a body. Yet it is our faith that if there is a natural body there will also be a spiritual body.

III. THE SPIRITUAL LIFE.—1. *Man Created in God's Image.*—God is a Spirit. This means that God does not have any outward physical form, yet has all the powers of thought, emotion and will, and is a Person. God possesses these powers in a much higher degree than man. The supreme proof of God's personality must be found in experience. The Psalmist sets forth this thought most beautifully in the one hundred and thirty-ninth Psalm. God is the Invisible Mind back of the created Universe. He creates and controls all, yet is not himself a physical form. God is Spirit, everywhere present, and no more in one place than another.

God is also called the "Father of Spirits." We can never understand fully how the individual receives his life from God, and after that is relatively independent. All life is within God, for he is the "Soul of the World." To man as an intelligent being God has given the power to think, feel and act. Each individual has a distinct personality which is the gift of God "in whom we all do live and move and have our being." This means that the individual, like God, is a person. Of course man possesses these powers in a much lower degree than his Creator, yet the gift of individual existence with rela-

tive independence is the supreme evidence to man that he is created by the Spirit of God. Thus in a real sense God is the All-Father. Every human spirit has its life in God. A human life is a finite expression of God. There may be other orders of conscious intelligent beings. There may be angels and archangels. We do not know, for instance, whether intelligent beings may inhabit other spheres. However, we are certain that the highest in man is most like what we believe God to be. God is Spirit, and man is made in the image of God.

*2. A Suggestion of Immortality.*—Man is not absolutely independent of God. He neither has absolute control over his physical life, nor is his mental and spiritual life possible apart from God. The human spirit is only relatively independent, never absolutely. If man possessed only such a spirit as an animal has, it would be needless to raise the question concerning immortality. As far as we can judge when an animal dies its body separates into its original physical and chemical elements, while its life, that is, its animal spirit, returns to God "in whose hand is the breath of every living thing." As the animal does not possess a conscious life nor have the possibility of such a life, its spirit then exists as a distinct form of life no more. Now the physical organization of man must perish as it does apparently in all the brute creation. There is no individual physical immortality. However, there is a higher spirit in man. There is the mark of personality, namely, the power consciously to think, feel and act. That is the only spirit which can be immortal.

"Manhood is the one immortal thing  
Beneath Time's changeful sky."

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There is a strong argument for immortality in the fact that these higher powers in man are most like God. They are the Spirit of God in man. Inasmuch as God is Immortal it may be the eternity of the human spirit is assured in so far as man has that same spirit. And yet we walk by faith and not by sight.

## LECTURE III

## THE NATURE OF MAN

I. INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT.—So far as man's physical life is concerned he is essentially a part of nature. Mental life dawned in the race when man first became aware of his own distinct existence. At that time he attained self-consciousness or self-awareness in a way somewhat similar to the experience of every child. Now the first dawn of consciousness meant much for the future progress of the race. Evolution did not cease when thought first dawned. Rather the principle of development was transferred to the realm of mind also. In fact for us one of the strongest proofs of evolution is to be seen in the mental development which takes place in the life of every one of us. Now psychology is an attempt to formulate the laws of mental action. Through introspection, observation and experiment we discover definite laws in the realm of mind. Psychology assumes there is no mental activity without a corresponding nervous activity. Nervous activity is under law, so it is reasonable to assume that mental activity is also under law. Psychology attempts to discover and formulate these laws.

II. SOME OF THE LAWS OF MENTAL ACTIVITY.—1. *The Three Aspects of Consciousness.*—Consciousness is the unity of all mental states. As long as life lasts it is

self-identical and continuous. Yet within consciousness we can distinguish three fundamental aspects. These are the intellectual, emotional and volitional aspects of consciousness. These three may always be distinguished in any experience. Every thought has some emotional quality and represents some definite act of will. Thus these three—Intellect, Feeling and Will—are always associated in all consciousness as fundamental aspects of it.

2. *The Nature of Attention.*—Attention is the search-light of consciousness. It focuses itself upon the centre of every field of mental vision. Attention is fluctuating in character, and cannot be focused for any great length of time upon any one thing. There are three types of attention: involuntary, as when we are forced to notice some strong sensation; spontaneous, as when we follow the free associations of ideas which are of immediate interest; and voluntary, as when attention is selective in its nature and determines what lines of thought to follow. If there is any sense in which man is free it must be found in this selective power of attention.

3. *The Law of Dynamogenesis.*—There is a tendency on the part of every idea which arises in consciousness to express itself in some form of appropriate action. Psychological experiments have shown beyond question that every thought and emotion and impulse which we have tends to express itself in motion. Every mental state has an effect, however slight, upon the nervous system. If we can think of a condition arising in which attention would be focused for any length of time upon a single thought, because of this law, the individual having that thought would act according to it.

4. *The Nature of Sensation.*—Sensations come to us through our physical senses. A sensation in conscious-

ness is usually the result of the stimulation of some sense organ. The materials of which we build up the higher mental life come to us originally through the senses. "There is nothing in the mind that was not previously in sense, except the mind itself." Some sensations do not give us correct impressions of the outside world. Hence, illusions may arise. However, the mind is able to correct its mistaken impressions and thus to form a true idea of the external world. Consciousness discriminates between sensations, and determines their relative values.

5. *The Nature of Memory.*—All mental states may be reproduced in consciousness. If we call the original state a presentation the memory is a representation. Memory is recognition of what has been reproduced in experience. It is the revival, after a shorter or longer time, of what was once an immediate experience. This representation may be nearly if not quite as vivid as the original. Memory implies the retention of experience, the possibility of its recognition and its localization in time. Till the end of life there may be the conscious revival of any past experience.

6. *The Law of Association.*—A memory always tends to bring up with it the emotions associated with the original experience. The representation of things once experienced tends to bring them up in memory in their original order. Ideas that have been sensed together frequently appear together as memories. Ideas once associated always tend to be associated. More than this, any new idea which resembles an old one has a tendency to reproduce in consciousness the image of the former one. Every association is due to previous facts of experience.

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7. *The Nature of Apperception.*—There are two sources of knowledge: the one is sense-perception; the other is self-consciousness. Apperception is the effort on the part of the self-consciousness to interpret what is given through the senses. In apperception all sorts of mental data are brought into their higher relations. This power to discover relations is a primary fact of all consciousness. There is a tendency always to interpret new sensations in terms of past experience. Any observer of children has noticed this tendency in them. The same is true of the adult. New sensations and experiences are first understood in terms of former experiences.

8. *The Nature of Perception.*—Perception is the process of construction by which we form a mental picture of the outside world. Material things once presented through sensation are mentally constructed and perceived. The office of the perceptive faculty is to construct in terms of time and space what reaches us through sensation.

9. *The Nature of Conception.*—Perception is built up of sensations. The concept is built up of perceptions. In the process of conception abstract notions are formed, and ideas are brought together under common relations. Thus laws are formulated, and principles discovered.

10. *The Nature of Judgment.*—Judgment is the assertion of relations between things of which we have formed conceptions. Judgment is the determining of relations. All sorts of materials are given us in the lower stages of mental development. Of these we have images brought up in memory, and concerning them we form concepts. Now judgment is the determining of what the relation is between the things we have experienced. If observation is faulty the judgment will be in error,

and if new conditions arise fresh judgments must be formed. Hence, there is infinite possibility for human progress.

III. THE QUESTION OF HUMAN FREEDOM.—1. *The Arguments for Freedom.*—For theological reasons it is argued that man must be free. God is all-good. It is, therefore, impossible to think of God foreordaining sin. So the fact of sin is presented as an argument for man's freedom. God created man free. From the standpoint of Psychology the question of free will resolves itself to the self determining character of attention. Can a man control the amount of attention he will exert at any given time? If so, man is free. It is asserted that man may freely initiate action, in other words, may become a cause. In such an act choice becomes initiative, and is in no way determined from without or from within. Volition then may exist entirely independent of external condition or internal motive. It is argued that every state of consciousness implies some act of will. Freedom means that a man is not hindered in his will. He can do as he pleases. In further support of this position it is argued that man is conscious of freedom. He is also aware of the existence of alternatives; he has the feeling of power; and he has the sense of responsibility. Therefore, he must be free.

*2. Arguments for Determinism.*—The doctrine of determinism has the support of such theologians as Saint Augustine, John Calvin and Jonathan Edwards. Saint Augustine argued that men were unable not to sin, therefore, they were not free. It has been claimed further that as God is all-powerful it is impossible to think of man as a free creature, for that would rob God of power. Hence, man's life is determined. In regard to

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man's consciousness of freedom it is argued in reply that introspection *never* reveals an event uncaused, or an event which could have arisen independently of antecedent conditions. From a psychological standpoint it is impossible after an event to say that more or less attention might have been put forth. This means that we have no freedom with regard to the past. And further, at the time of an act there is no feeling of freedom, for according to the law of dynamogenesis, at the time of any given act, inhibitory and restraining thoughts and impulses are temporarily not forcefully present in consciousness. Again, Psychology discovers no choice without a motive. Man cannot please what he pleases, for there must always be a motive to his pleasing. If the will is a matter of caprice it violates all known law, and being an unrelated will cannot be responsible to authority. The basis of our whole existence, it is argued, rests upon the assumption that under given conditions men will always act in a given way. Scientific investigation shows laws of conformity everywhere. All psychical events must be explained by reference to antecedent psychical conditions. Psychology assumes there is a definite relation between the body and the mind. If then science shows that the psychical states are determined, it may be argued that the mental states corresponding thereto are also determined. And furthermore, when we see how powerful law is in the realm of mind, it may seem to be entirely possible to think of man's life as determined by psychological laws. So the position of strict science is that mental events are not isolated processes, but are definitely connected with antecedent conditions. A given mental condition will always produce a given mental result. There is another position in which

the claim is made that choice is externally determined. There is a struggle between forces. Man is powerless to control this struggle in any way. All man may do is to note the result of it. The sense of conflict then becomes nothing more than a mental thermometer which records, but does not control the changes taking place in the mental world.

3. *Conclusions*.—If consciousness has no other function than that of a passive onlooker those experiences which seem most real to us are illusory. Experience testifies to the reality of the inner struggle. Furthermore, we acknowledge that what we call free activity is an expression of what we are. An act that does not express character is not free. Any doctrine of freedom, therefore, must consider our choices as expressions of our nature. As such, choices are not capricious. They are not free in the sense that they are under no law, but free in the sense that they are determined by no external conditions. Now inasmuch as all life is under law, mental life can never be capricious. It must be uniform and lawful. The will can never act without reason. Therefore, the will can never be coerced. From this point of view the will is determined in that it must act according to law, but free in that it is not forced by anything outside of itself.

Freedom is not exemption from law. If an act could stand in no causal connection with either the past or future of life, education would be without significance. We tacitly assume that there must be a cause for every mental state; and we act on the assumption that the will may be determined or changed in its character by education, moral suasion and even punishment. A will that could not be appealed to by these methods would be

absolutely unreliable. In fact it would be irrational and irresponsible. Theoretically a man may do anything which he pleases, but he will never please to do a thing which violates the laws of his nature, or of so much of his nature as may be expressed in any given act. Socrates may be tempted, but he will never deny the spirit that is in him. Unless the moral man would violate the very constitution of his moral life it is impossible for him to commit an evil deed. The moral character of his choices is determined by his moral nature. Unless his nature changes he will commit no unworthy deed. So whatever conclusions may be reached concerning the nature of human freedom it must be remembered that the highest freedom is that which originates within a person in the free application and working out of law. The laws are determined. The freedom we have is in the use we make of them. The will is inwardly determined by its own nature. The will is free so far as it may express itself in any act appropriate to its nature.

## LECTURE IV

## THE ORIGIN OF CONSCIENCE

## I. THEORIES AS TO THE NATURE OF CONSCIENCE.—

1. *The View That Conscience is Supernatural in Origin.*—When morality was first associated with religion, conscience was looked upon as having supernatural authority. The law of Moses, for instance, was regarded as supernatural in origin. The early Christians regarded the Gospel as a new law. The same idea is seen in some types of modern Puritanism. Concerning the ultimate nature of goodness there are two views: Thomas Aquinas expressed one when he said that God willed the good because it was good; and Duns Scotus the other when he said the good was good only because God willed it. If God wills the good because it is good there must be some standard of goodness other than the will of God. Then men ought to be able to discover such a standard. If they cannot they can never be sure that what God wills is good. Hence it follows that whatever may be the ultimate origin of conscience it is not something external to man, and is not imposed upon him by an arbitrary authority. The ultimate reason for the existence of conscience must be found within.

2. *The View That Conscience is an Intuition.*—In its baldest form the theory of conscience as an intuition means that one may know infallibly what is right and

wrong. Such knowledge would be the object of immediate apprehension. Kant expressed it thus: "An erring conscience is a chimera.—The commonest intellect can easily and without hesitation see what duty is." There are two possible views as to the ultimate worth of any moral act: the first is that it must be judged by its effects; the second is that every act has absolute good or bad qualities in itself. According to the second view, if intuition is infallible, one ought always to be able to know by direct intuition what is right and what is wrong. It further is argued that there is no essential difference between moral laws and the laws of nature. They both reveal God's thought and will. Hence, it is necessary to observe moral laws as well as natural laws. But can it be claimed that any man has immediate intuition of natural laws! Neither can it be claimed that he has immediate intuition of moral laws. There is a truth, however, in the theory of intuition. There are some men who seem to be peculiarly conscious of a moral mission. Socrates was such a man. He declared that not once did he disobey the *daemon* (spirit) that was in him. Jesus, too, was conscious of such a mission when he said, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me." There are some natures of a strongly marked individuality. Such men are conscious of a duty or a mission. They know by intuition that God has called them, and they dare not disobey. Yet we should not forget that even such an awareness may be in part the result of antecedent conditions. Intuitionism is emphasis upon individuality as distinct from other conditions.

3. *The View That Conscience is a Form of Reason.*—Socrates taught that virtue without knowledge is impossible. All the virtues, he said, are a form of reason.

If a man knows the good he will, therefore, inevitably seek it. No man will knowingly or willingly do wrong. Virtue that is based on habit, education or authority may find the right path, but not necessarily. It will be at best a blind groping until reason begins to control. To become truly good one must search diligently for wisdom. Then in the conflict with untrained impulses he will be able to form correct moral judgments. In criticism of these Socratic positions it seems necessary to raise the question whether it is inevitably true that the man who knows the good will seek it. It may be admitted that if he does know the good the chances of his seeking it are greatly increased. Nevertheless, the moral life is more than knowledge.

*4. The View That Conscience is the Product of Experience.*—The moral life is a development. At first it is a blind groping. In time a moral ideal is discovered. There is a material basis for it in human desires and aspirations. When the moral ideal dawns in this natural world the ideal henceforth should be sought after that it might be in time attained. Experience, therefore, leads the way. In that process the conscience is determined on the one hand by surroundings, and on the other by individual variations. The science of Ethics should indicate the relation between these two factors, and outline the character of a normal conscience. For the individual, experience will make conscience reasonable. There is the sense of duty, but duty must be guided by reason. For instance, kindness is a desirable moral quality, but kindness unguided by reason may defeat its own end and even work positive harm. Experience should show what are the principles of true kindness. And so in regard to all moral qualities the

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conscience concerning them develops through experience.

The conscience is obscure in its beginnings. It may even have in it traits of an order lower than the human. These need to be restrained and controlled by reason. There has been in the history of the race the gradual bringing out into clearer light a moral ideal. What has been absolute in authority at one time has been superceded at another. Thus the conscience through experience has been lifted up to higher points of view. This has been especially true in the history of the race. It should also be true of the individual. Immature moral ideals ought always to be superceded by worthier ones as the individual's conscience through experience is put to school and learns its lessons. Thus we see there is a moral education involved in human experience whether of the race or the individual. At any given time the character of the conscience reflects the nature of the experience.

5. *Conclusions as to the Nature of Conscience.*—God reveals the authority of the moral ideal in conscience. Yet moral laws are not arbitrary. They are inherent in the nature of things, and the nature of man. Conscience is the reflection of the moral constitution of the world in which we live. Conscience, therefore, has the practical function to preserve life. If there is a rational principle in the moral ideal we must admit there is a place for reason and the reflective judgment. On the other hand if conscience slumbers there may be the loss of power to appreciate moral values. In such a condition the light within a man will become a great darkness.

Conscience is internal. It lays obligation upon men to do right. Kant once said: "Act as if the maxim of thy action were to become by thy will a universal law of

nature." But if there be no such thing as an immediate infallible intuition every act must in some way play a part in the process of moral education. The goal of the moral life is to make inclination and duty correspond. According to Kant a conflict between inclination and duty is essential to morality. This position may be criticised. It is sometimes a bad sign when a man has to consult his conscience before acting. There need not always be the inner struggle. The trained conscience will act unconsciously and automatically. For such a conscience moral problems once disposed of need not come up again for decision unless in experience new adjustments demand reconsideration.

There is but one Duty. There may be conflicts in the mind as to the best way of doing it. Jesus said, "If thine eye be single thy whole body shall be full of light." This implies that everything in life should either give way to or assist in the one thing which is from the moral point of view the attainment of the moral goal. Not all the struggles involved are wholly intellectual in type. In some cases the intellect will be fully convinced as to the correct course to pursue, but the feelings, because they are more conservative, will hesitate to acknowledge the verdict of the reason. In judging what the moral worth of any given act is, we should ask whether it is a justifiable means to a justifiable end. Experience will teach us in the moral realm as elsewhere. If we say the conscience is the product of experience it might seem to follow that it has no divine authority, but such a thing does not follow. Men will never cease to regard morality as related to God as well as to the inner constitution of things. Hippocrates expressed it well when he said, "All things are divine and all things are also human."

**II. TERMS USED IN THE SCIENCE OF ETHICS.—1. Relation of Ethics to Logic and Aesthetics.**—There are three sciences which answer to the three fundamental aspects of consciousness. These are Logic, Aesthetics and Ethics. Logic investigates the processes of thinking. It asks whether the results given us in the psychological processes are true or false. By means of the syllogism logic seeks formally to determine what is true. Truth is the ideal which answers to the intellectual aspect of consciousness. The science of Aesthetics investigates the character and value of the emotional life. In it an attempt is made to form a theory of the harmonious and beautiful. It is the philosophy of the beautiful. It is an attempt to formulate the general principles upon which the creation and existence of the beautiful depend. The ideal of the beautiful thus answers to the emotional aspect of consciousness. Finally, the science of Ethics attempts to investigate the character of the volitional aspect of consciousness as the will strives to attain a moral end. Ethics attempts to determine the nature of the moral life, to show the character of the moral goal, and the means of attaining it. Thus Goodness, the goal of the ethical life, is shown to answer to the volitional aspect of the human consciousness. The three ideals of Truth, Beauty and Goodness are studied by the three sciences, Logic, Aesthetics and Ethics.

**2. Egoism and Altruism.**—The end of human striving is the preservation and perfection of human life. The question thus arises as to whose life. Egoism answers it is the life of the individual. Altruism says, it is the life of others. Egoism, then, means devotion to one's individual ends, and altruism means devotion to the

welfare of others. However, these two points of view can never be absolutely separated. Pure egoism is impossible, for every man is dependent to some degree upon his fellows. In its effect every act is both egoistic and altruistic. It is, therefore, impossible for a man to attain the highest individual goal apart from the highest social ideal. Egoism and altruism should always co-operate with each other.

3. *Hedonism and Energism*.—Hedonism is the theory that the highest moral good it to be found in pleasure as an end of action. Hedonism asserts that the will is universally bent on pleasure. Therefore, pleasure is the highest good. Everything else will then have value only so far as it conduces to human pleasure. Egoistic hedonism is the doctrine that each man ought to seek his own pleasure; while universalistic hedonism asserts that human society should aim to secure the greatest amount of happiness for the greatest possible number. This latter view is sometimes called Utilitarianism. Energism, on the other hand, is the theory that the end sought by the moral life is not pleasure, but some form of concrete and definite moral activity. Energism does not deny that there may be pleasure involved in this activity. There is a distinction between taking pleasure in a thing and aiming at the idea of pleasure as the thing to be sought. Energism asserts that the end of the moral life is activity. If that activity involves pleasure it is well. The pleasure, however, is not the essential thing.

4. *Idealism*.—Idealism is the view that the good is an essential element in the constitution of the world, and that all things exist for the sake of the good. The physical and outer world, then, must in the last analysis

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be a part of a moral order. This view is opposed by what is known as the theory of Materialism, which asserts that the constitution of the world has no necessary connection with morality. The physical world came into being by chance, and is indifferent to moral facts. Idealism takes the opposite ground and claims that the natural constitution of the world as well as the normal development of human life tends toward some form of a moral ideal. Morality then becomes the unfolding of the essential nature of manhood, and is always to be found in the nature of things.

## LECTURE V

## THE RISE OF THE MORAL LIFE

I. SOCIAL FACTORS IN THE RISE OF THE MORAL LIFE.—  
1. *The Meaning of Custom.*—Our word moral comes from a Latin word meaning custom. Our word ethics comes from a Greek word having the same meaning. Morality and the ethical life are closely related to custom and have their genesis in it. The conscience at first is the reflection in the mind of the individual of what is customary in the life of the community in which he lives. In the lowest forms of tribal life such as we find in primitive society the savage is obliged to conform to the tribal ideal. He is pained when he falls short of this. His conscience approves him when he conforms to it. A moral life is possible only where there is purposeful seeking after some type of a moral ideal. Animals tend toward certain ends, but so far as we can judge are never conscious of the nature of those ends. Human conduct, on the other hand, is consciously self-willed and self-directed. Some form of a moral life is inevitable when the individual becomes conscious of himself as a person. In the struggle for life itself moral development is certain to take place. In the lower forms of civilization the members of the community resemble each other in physical appearance, and are practically alike in the things they do and in what they think. The hand

of custom is stretched out over them, and from its authority but few individuals dare to appeal. But as the race develops some individuals become dissatisfied and demand higher types of morality. Such men, though non-conformists in their own days, lay the foundation for real progress in morals. They initiate customs which become the bases for new developments.

In this evolution of society a custom which was once necessary and which was regarded as moral by every one may later be unnecessary and even immoral. The standards of morality interpreted through custom, change. For instance, blood-revenge and slavery were once regarded as permissible. Some of the other brutal methods of the past may also have been necessary as a stage in the long process of moral training. It also may be that in time war, now a survival of barbarism, will be superceded by arbitration or other humane method. In these and in many other ways we shall see how men have gradually discovered the value of honor, justice and love. Customs may change, but the truths which are the basis of the moral life do not change.

2. *The Relation of the Moral Life to Law.*—So far as law has a bearing upon morality it may be spoken of as written and unwritten. From a legal point of view unwritten law is often called "common law." There must be a basis in custom upon which to frame any law. Codes of laws are prepared and promulgated by authority. They contain definite precepts which reflect more or less perfectly the moral habits of the people. The Roman code, for instance, was formed after Rome had conquered several peoples. Her lawyers carefully examined the several codes of laws among the conquered peoples, and discovered there were several principles

common to all codes. These principles were then set forth as Roman Law. Laws demand acceptance wherever the authority promulgating them holds sway. Immorality then becomes the breaking of recognized law. Crude morality is conformity to a low moral standard. The office of law is to harmonize individual actions in such a way as to secure uniformity with as little friction as possible. For the general good it is necessary to control and to restrain men. An authority which is able to set forth law may then train men so as to secure a certain moral conformity. Thus law which first has its origin in custom may become the basis of a real morality.

However, not all laws guiding in things moral are written. There are laws which have never been formulated by any authority, which are just as valid for morality. These, too, have their origins in custom. For instance, no laws by which to define the conduct of a gentleman have ever been formulated, yet society by mutual consent acknowledges that there are certain types of conduct worthy of a gentleman. Thus society by its written law has expressed through its customs an ideal to which, within limits, every gentleman is supposed to conform. In general the moral life of a people is determined by the customs of the best members of the community. Hence there is always the possibility of progress. Customs may gradually change. Laws also may change. The result of this will be to purify the moral life of the people.

3. *The Relation of Custom and Law to Religion.*—In the lowest conceptions of superior beings there is little moral quality attributed to them. In animism and fetichism especially there is no morality worthy the name ascribed to such objects of nature as symbolize the divine

to the unenlightened mind. In fact it is a mental impossibility for man to conceive of Deity as having moral qualities unexperienced by man himself. When human society discovers moral qualities in its own organization then such qualities can be attributed to the gods. A transition from a nature religion to an ethical religion is as important for the future development of the moral life as the step from polytheism to monotheism is for the development of the religious life. When Deity is thought of as moral then duty becomes obligation not only to society but also to God. In the laws of Moses, for instance, religious, moral and legal duties are all set forth as parts of one system. They are equally binding because they have divine authority back of them. Thus we see how it is possible for customs which may have existed long before to receive at length the authority of religion. Religion then sanctions the social custom and the moral life derived from it and gives to it religious authority.

II. THE DEVELOPMENT OF MORAL LIFE IN THE INDIVIDUAL.—1. *The Fundamental Basis of the Moral Life.*—There was a time in the history of the race when the distinctions between the natural and spiritual world first came into clear view. The first man must have been somewhat unstable. He was swayed by impulses and passions which he had received from a lower type of life. Gradually stability was to be acquired. From a state of innocence virtue was to be gained through conflict. However, the very fact of the distinction between good and evil dawning in the intellect made possible real moral progress.

In the first dawn of the moral life in every individual there is an awareness of opposition or contradiction between the ideal and the actual. Human nature then is

divided against itself. The dawning moral life is awakened in the midst of a lower life. A conflict arises between appetites and impulses on the one hand and the ideal life on the other. This may take place when the child first becomes aware of his own distinct and conscious existence. With the knowledge of self-existence there comes also a sense of freedom. The child discovers a moral order in his enlarging world, and he finds it necessary to adjust himself to it. In order for a human mind to develop normally it must develop in relation to other minds. Morality, therefore, has its social basis in the relations between persons. There is on the part of the individual an innate necessity for forming it. The moral life would be impossible apart from this universal aspect of man's nature. There are two sets of impulses in man. These are the individualistic and the social. The first lead a man to seek his private good, and the second to seek the public good. Hence an act may be either egoistic or altruistic. In practice it is impossible to separate these two aspects. No man liveth unto himself and no man dieth unto himself. The basis then of the moral life is to be found in the necessity of the individual to adjust himself to that larger world of which he becomes conscious when the moral life first dawns within him.

2. *The Relation of Authority to the Individual.*—Every moralist is a child of his times. At first the conscience of the individual is his awareness of the customs and laws of the community in which he lives. Inevitably society will impose upon a man an external order to which he must submit. He will discover that his liberty cannot become license. There is first the authority of parents and teachers. Then a larger circle approves or

condemns the individual's conduct. Law also will render its verdict. Finally God may be thought of as the author of the law. Thus the individual will necessarily frequently compare his own inclinations as well as his conduct with any one of these four sources of moral authority. Emotions of fear or of anticipation will arise before a given action; while a feeling of remorse or approval will follow. Thus the individual's life may be as varied as the customs of the people will allow. Only in a limited sense is it possible to speak of a universal morality. There are certain fundamental laws upon which the existence of society is founded. If, for instance, property rights were never respected, and no one ever told the truth, and every one sought to slay his brother, society would be absolutely impossible. Such laws as, "Thou shalt not steal" and "Thou shalt not bear false witness" and "Thou shalt not kill" are fundamental to the very existence of human life itself. However, the way in which these and other moral laws will be applied is not the same for all times and places. Conditions always must determine largely the way in which moral laws must be applied. The particular form of the moral life is determined by historical and psychological conditions. Morality develops in terms of human history and the human mind. The individual must needs submit himself to such authority.

3. *The Moral Goal.*—The moral life is formed by social conditions; yet with the development of mental life the ideal becomes more individualistic in character. The possibilities of such a tendency are seen in the fact that all our complex modern life has probably developed from a single type of primitive society. For the individual the advance begins when he first emancipates

himself from a merely social ideal. Such an individual becomes a free being. He then begins to mould his own life. Youth is the time when character forms. The "set" character takes then usually remains through life. The youth becomes aware of his relations to a larger world. He attempts to adjust himself with relation to the home, society, the world at large and the kingdom of God. He is determined if possible to adjust himself and the world he lives in to an ideal. He is forced to face and to attempt to solve a moral problem. He becomes aware of a higher will to which he feels himself bound to submit. In religion this will is attributed to God.

There are three theories as to the method of applying the moral ideal. According to the Greek idea, if a man's natural impulses be restrained and educated he will become a moral man. Human nature is to be perfected in a perfect civilization. The ideal individual produces and lives in an ideal social condition. According to the primitive Christian view man's natural impulses are to die. The life to be attained is not of this world. It is to be won by the doing of duty as set forth by God's command. Saint Augustine even declared that man's natural virtues were but "splendid vices, and not to be viewed as virtues but as vices." The modern idea is that the moral life combines in its realization the truths suggested in both the above points of view. It is a kingdom of God on earth and in heaven. The ideal life is the harmonious development of all one's native powers including the culture of any special gift. The use of all powers for all time in the seeking of the Highest Good is the goal of the moral life. There is a Highest Good for society and for the individual. It is impossible to

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define it. Its nature only can be described. In such a realm definite rules of conduct for the individual are out of the question. It would be as reasonable to formulate rules for a Raphael to paint by as to attempt to formulate the detailed principles of such morality. The more advanced the moral life is the less is it possible to formulate rules and laws for it.

## LECTURE VI

## THE RISE OF THE RELIGIOUS LIFE.

I. THE POINT OF VIEW.—There are two points of view from which to consider the origin of religion. It may be claimed on the one hand that it is a divine revelation; and on the other that it is an aspect of human development. The idea is advanced that there was an original revelation given to man. In the case of the heathen this revelation is corrupted. Religion is frequently defined as the "knowing and worshiping of God." From this point of view it consists largely in knowledge. It is claimed further that Christianity is divine in its origin because it answers as no other religion does to the needs of man. Christianity, therefore, is a redemptive revelation. An extreme position held in some circles is that true religion is only direct revelation and as such is imposed upon man from without.

The question resolves itself to this. Is religion a function of man's spiritual health or is it a remedy for his spiritual disease? The answer is that religion is natural to man. It is grounded in his very constitution. If religion is considered as divine revelation it means that God by his Spirit operates on human hearts. Saint Augustine expresses this truth well when he says, "Our hearts are restless, ever restless, till they find their rest in thee." The study of religion discovers what may be

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designated as a religious capacity in man. From this follows that the absolute religion must be able to satisfy the religious instinct in every way.

Now the Science of Comparative Religion gathers its material from many sources. It thus discovers evidence of the religious impulse everywhere. Therefore, in defining religion we must look for a common element in all types. We must seek for an essential fact commonly possessed by each one. This fact may exist even apart from moral code, methods of worship or dogma. Codes, rituals and dogmas develop in terms of human history. They may have a historical explanation. Thus the development of religion may have an important social significance. In fact religion is one of the most important elements in social evolution. Religious ideas have no small influence upon science, literature and art. On the other hand things taking place in the outside world profoundly influence religion. For instance, the Medieval Church was wedded to a certain scientific theory. Modern science has exposed the errors of that theory. Because of the scientific method it has become necessary for religion to adapt itself to the new conception of things. In our own day there is a remarkable social evolution taking place, and this, too, is affecting the character of religion profoundly. Other movements also might be mentioned which influence the line of religious development and determine its point of emphasis. Now amid all of these facts it is the problem of Theology to trace out the origin of religious ideas and determine their value. If it is possible to do it, we must find a common element in all religions. Then we must note the successive stages of development. Thus it may appear again and again that what we often designate as revelation is

but the breaking of the shell that conceals the unexpected growth. Hence religion may be regarded from the divine point of view as a revelation, and from the human point of view as an essential phase of human progress.

II. THE ORIGIN OF RELIGION IN THE RACE.—It may not be possible for us fully to account for the first dawn of religion, but the laws of its development may be discovered. The scientist studies life and discovers the laws of its development; yet he is not able to tell how life first originated. In somewhat the same way we may not know how religion originated, yet we may be able to interpret the laws of its development. There may be a theology for every religion, for even the lowest type has some thoughts back of it which may be classified. Facts in the spiritual world may be put in order as well as in the natural world. This is possible because the fundamental laws of the mind are the same everywhere, and they control the line of development.

Several theories have been advanced to account for the origin of religion. The first is that religion was aroused by the tendency on the part of primitive man to seek for a cause of natural events. Such a theory presupposes too mature an intellect. The second theory is that religion originated in fetichism. Fetichism has appeared as a stage of development. It first arose as a result of the tendency of man to personify the forces of nature, coupled with the desire to get some supposed good from the fetich. Now it may be true that fetichism is a stage of religious development, but it does not follow that fetichism is sufficient to account for the origin of religion. A third theory, advanced by Spencer, is that religion arose through belief in the existence of departed spirits. To Spencer, ancestor-worship is the root of all

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religion. Now it is true that given the idea of spirit the idea may be purified, yet this theory is inadequate fully to account for the origin of religion. There is a fourth possible position that as primitive man noticed all the changes taking place in nature around him he became aware of his dependence upon nature. In time as he came to understand his impressions of the outer world religious ideas arose within him. Those ideas were then a normal psychological step in the development of the mind. Religion, therefore, arose in the course of the normal mental development of man.

In its development religion is closely associated with morality. In its lower forms religion does not have a special moral significance. The gods are not thought of as moral patterns, nor do they have moral authority. No questions need be raised as to the worshiper's moral character so long as he performs his religious duties faithfully. But as the moral life develops religion becomes associated with morality. Not until men discover moral problems can they assign moral character to the objects of their worship. After that the gods may become the defenders of what is right. The degree to which morality is supported by religion indicates the stage of culture of any people.

Now the fact that we find a universal religious impulse implies that there are some universal truths which may be detected in the careful analysis of all religions. In a way every religion acknowledges a universal God. As man increases in civilization he will always come to think of the world as a unity, and at the same time he will come to think of God as a Unity. Again, all religions acknowledge that man is dependent upon God. Man finds himself in an insecure world in which he feels the need

of divine help. The fact of need is one of the special motives in the origin of religion. The idea has been held that religion originated in fear. "Fear begets gods," said Lucretius. It is no doubt true that fear is powerful in all lower types of religion, but fear will ultimately yield to higher emotions. These facts show how man recognizes his dependence upon God. Lastly, there is a tendency in all religion to become spiritual. God comes to be thought of as Spirit, and man is believed to be immortal. Thus we see that in the origin of religion in the race there are certain definite laws of development, and certain truths underlying all religions.

III. THE ORIGIN OF RELIGION IN THE INDIVIDUAL.—The origin of religion in the individual must be studied from the standpoint of his social surroundings as well as the stages of his individual development. Religion is a social phenomenon. Each individual is born into a given community from which he receives a social inheritance that determines more or less the character of his personal religious life. Where religion takes on organized form, as in the Hebrew nation, the individual must accept the ritual and adopt the recognized order of worship. From the social standpoint the individual always will be controlled by the moral and religious life of the community in which he lives.

Now in his personal religion there will be well defined stages of development. Already we have seen that religion lies in the very constitution of man's nature. It is an essential aspect of his true development. In fact it is the highest thing in all human experience. It is therefore reasonable to suppose that religion has a basis of truth, otherwise this highest aspect of man's nature would be a looking out into space.

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From the psychological standpoint three questions arise. Is religion to be based in the intellect, the emotions or the will? Now any attempt to answer this question involves the careful analysis of religious experience. In general it may be said that religion originates not in thought or feeling or will as distinct from each other, but in an experience which involves all three. Man's spiritual nature cannot be divided. Truth satisfies the intellect. Beauty and harmony satisfy the emotional nature. Goodness satisfies the will. God satisfies man in every aspect of his nature. There can be no religious knowledge not touched by an element of emotion, and no emotion not touched by knowledge. Feelings may be contradictory. It is necessary for reason to interpret them. Hegel speaks of three elements in religion. There is first the idea of the Infinite or Universal. Then there is the sense of the finite or individual. Finally there may be the union of these two in religious experience. Theology is the reasonable interpretation of such experience.

The theory usually advanced is that religion has its basis in feeling. The emotional nature, it is argued, is the organ of communication with God. Religion is the immediate contact of the soul with Him. Schleiermacher has defined religion from this point of view—"Religion is the feeling of dependence upon God." Such religious feelings are possible for the most immature intellect. Now there are three things to be considered: there is the religious experience itself; there is the cause of it; there is also the analysis of it. If the emphasis is to be placed upon the emotional character of religion in order to make it available for all men it may be claimed with equal force that there is an element of knowledge in religion which is also available for all men. Principal Caird has

expressed this thought well. "Religion of mere feeling would not know itself to be religion." Apart from an element of knowledge religious feelings could not be distinguished from other emotional experiences. Hence we are to conclude that we are to look beyond the emotional aspect of religious experience. We must seek for that which causes the experience. Then we must ask the reason for it. Thus a rational element will be admitted in religion. Such knowledge can never be separated from the emotional character of religious experience, but may always be distinguished in it.

Again it may be argued that religion is not to be derived from the understanding or the feelings primarily, but from the will. From this standpoint religion is the will to believe that life has some deeper meaning than can be intellectually proved or emotionally experienced. Religion then takes the form of faith. Even in the face of appearances such faith will assert that God is love, even where it cannot prove the wisdom of God's ways. Such religion of the will also has a practical aspect. It means that whoever believes in the worth of truth or beauty or goodness is a child of God, and whoever labors to save the valuable things of life is a religious person. In our own day there is no doubt a stronger tendency than ever before to make religion a matter of the will.

Finally, it remains to be said that probably the line of religious development in any individual will be determined largely by social factors from without and constitutional traits within. Whether for a given individual, religion will be mainly a matter of intellect or emotion, or will, need not alter the conclusions we have reached concerning the general character of the rise

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of religion. For the individual it must always arise through some type of personal experience. Then the analysis of the experience will afford ample material from which to construct the system of religious doctrine.

## LECTURE VII

## THE METHODS OF REVELATION

I. THE SOURCES OF REVELATION.—1. *Nature*.—There is a revelation in nature. In some way the whole created universe shares in a great purpose. Evolution is the process, but not the Cause. There is design in nature. There is, therefore, a testimony for God in the natural world which makes unbelievers inexcusable. Swedenborg even taught that all nature is a parable, and claimed for himself an especial illumination by which to interpret it. God reveals himself in all natural events no less than in so-called miracles. There is the ever-present miracle by which nature and all the created world reveal God.

2. *History*.—There is a revelation in human history. This is seen in God's dealings with all peoples. Confucius and Buddha, Zarathustra and Socrates all wrestled with the same fundamental spiritual problems, and in some ways discovered the same truths. The Odes of the Chinese sages are very similar to some passages of Hebrew poetry. Buddha was not far from the kingdom of God. Zarathustra taught his people to believe in a kingdom of righteousness under the wise spirit Ahura-Mazda. The literature of the poets and dramatists of Greece also shows how near to prophetic truths were some of her thinkers. And so we might go on

and see how God did not leave himself without witness among any people. There is some truth in every religion. We can no longer say there is the absolute true and absolute false.

The highest revelation was given to Israel. The Hebrew people had a genius for religion. From obscure beginnings and all through the development of Israel's national life God was forming a people to become the organs of a revelation to all mankind. The idea of Israel's special election was in the minds of the prophets from the eighth century onward. The highest prophetic view of Israel's mission is given us in the closing chapters of the Book of Isaiah. We must judge Israel by its best, and we cannot fail to see in that evidences of a divine revelation. God revealed himself especially in Israel's history.

3. *Individuals*.—From the standpoint of the mass of human society those individuals who have clearer intellectual or spiritual visions than their fellows are prophets. Such individuals mould human thought and change the course of human history. Progress is made possible through the leaders. If, then, God raises up a particular man to whom a special vision is granted, all the world may follow that man and be lifted up thereby. However, we cannot limit revelation to such leaders only. There is a sense in which God makes a revelation to every one. Objectively nature itself is a testimony to every man; but subjectively, that is, within, there is a still higher witness. There are degrees of revelation. It is always limited by the capacity of the individual to whom it is given. Yet there is some revelation to all, inasmuch as there is a true light that lighteth every man coming into the world.

The highest revelation through an individual is seen in Jesus. On the one hand he fulfilled Israel's spiritual destiny, and on the other he was "the desire of all nations." If we find that Jesus reveals in his own life what we conceive of as the highest truth concerning God and man, we need look for no higher revelation. Jesus seems to have been aware of himself as the one who fulfilled the highest spiritual hopes of Israel's prophets. He was the one that should come. In a historical sense he was a leader similar in kind but different in degree from other leaders before him in Israel and other nations. Being, therefore, a leader of men the supreme proof to us of the truth of the revelation of God which he claimed to give must be found in the fact that he initiated and quickened in the life of humanity the miracle of moral transformation. Thus we see how the revelation of God originating in nature and through history reaches its highest form of expression in the life of Jesus.

II. THEORIES AS TO THE METHOD OF REVELATION.—There are two theories as to the method of revelation. The first is that revelation is divine in its origin, and, therefore, has divine authority even apart from human progress. There is a redemptive revelation, as well as a natural one. From this point of view, not what man achieves, but what God reveals is the ultimate reason for revelation. The appeal must be made to the supernatural. Formerly prophecy and miracle were set forth by the theologians as proofs of the supernatural origin of revelation. In our own time the line of proof is moral and for us quite convincing. There is a divine revelation given to man.

The second view is that revelation is involved in hu-

man progress. Tyndall claimed that Christianity was as old as the creation. Nature would lead one to God, therefore, a special revelation was not necessary. However, other factors come in here. In human progress there has been a gradual working out of moral and religious ideals. As the moral ideal has been purified, the authority of religion has been given to it. In human progress moral and religious ideas have been worked out gradually. In Christianity we see the highest goal yet reached. From one point of view it is the goal of human progress. From the other it is a divine revelation. Thus human thinking and progress point to a revelation worked out in human history.

III. CONCLUSIONS AS TO THE METHOD OF REVELATION.—1. *Revelation is Necessary.*—In the human mind there is a tendency to express all thoughts in action. The action then becomes a mental necessity. In somewhat the same way as a man must think and then express his thoughts in action there is in God a necessity which compels him to express himself in action. Revelation then becomes necessary. There is in God an eternal principle of self-revelation. It is not necessary to distinguish so sharply as the old theologians did between a natural and a revealed religion. Prophecy and miracles are not the supreme proofs of religious truth. The moral argument is the supreme proof. Yet there are truths in the arguments for a natural religion. Some of these are as follows: The world demands a First Cause; design in the world proves an intelligent Being acting through it; there are arguments which point to God as the highest object of our thought and as the Ground and Source of it; the moral argument necessitates a moral law-giver; the historical argument shows design in history. On

the other hand the following claims are made for a supernatural revelation: Natural religion leads us to look for a further revelation of God; any further revelation must be supernatural; Jesus is the supreme moral miracle and as such becomes the organ of the supernatural revelation. If God operates in one way in the laws of nature, he operates in another way upon the human spirit through revelation. Thus we see there is truth in both positions. The function of revelation is not to reveal truths which the human mind can conceive, but to make real in experience what men would not of themselves have the intellectual or moral courage to believe. Lessing says, "What education is to the individual, revelation is to the race." On the one hand the mind is prepared by human progress, and on the other divine revelation comes in as a religious education. Like all other education, it is won at the cost of intellectual and spiritual struggle. The two phases of revelation should always be distinguished. There is human and divine activity involved.

2. *There is Progress in Revelation.*—The Bible testifies to the progressive unfolding to Israel of a divine election and purpose. From one point of view sacred history is governed by the same laws as other history. The same psychological and sociological principles apply in both cases. We need not be surprised, then, to find the earlier stages of revelation relatively imperfect. It is claimed on strictly natural grounds that if man did not have the full power to attain the end of his existence he would be behind all other created things. In reply it may be argued that inasmuch as man has a higher destiny than any other creature it is necessary for him to have a supernatural source of help. Of course this

implies that revelation must be given under limitations. From man's side the knowledge of God is not absolute, but relative. It is always conceived of under the limitations of human perception. In the nature of the case the knowledge of God requires, not only a Revealer, but an intellect capable of receiving the revelation. There is a psychological obstacle to the giving of a complete revelation at once. God has created man in a state of becoming. His nature is to develop physically and mentally. Hence, because of the necessary mental and spiritual limitations under which man lives, the revelation of God to him must be progressive. A new idea which has no historical connection with past experience cannot be suddenly revealed from heaven, for such an idea would be utterly unintelligible. Even Jesus had to say to his disciples at the last: "I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." We must conclude that revelation is progressive and is given to man as he develops power to receive it.

IV. THE INTERPRETATION OF REVELATION.—1. *The Place of Religious Authority.*—In the interpretation of revelation there is a place for authority. The authority may rest in tradition, a book, a dogma or a creed. According to the Catholic view, the Church is sole authority in matters of Christian faith and doctrine. Saint Augustine once said: "I would not believe the Gospel, did not the authority of the Catholic Church move me thereto." The Reformers substituted the authority of the Bible for that of the Church. Creeds, too, have been set forth. Authority has thus conserved religious faith. This has been and is a necessary service. Yet the principle of authority has never worked fully. Men have always made mental reservations and taken excep-

tions. There is, therefore, a place for individual freedom.

We have seen that revelation is not given "en bloc." It does not come down from heaven ready made. Therefore the worth of anything claiming to be revelation must be tested by the same processes of mental analysis as any other thing. Unless it can be framed into thought and be stated intelligibly, it is not a successful revelation. Inasmuch as human progress is an important factor in the giving of revelation the individual who has a clearer vision than his fellows should never be unduly restrained by the hand of authority. The individual is the progressive element in the interpretation of revelation. Authority is the conservative element. Each should correct the other.

2. *The Relation of Reason to Revelation.*—In the interpretation of revelation the mental powers should be freely used. Revelation is no revelation until it takes the shape of human thought. Faith without knowledge lacks stability. The truth is arrived at by inquiry. In the final interpretation of revelation every man must fall back upon reason and private judgment. It is sometimes said there are three factors in forming Christian Theology. These are the Scriptures, Christian Experience and Reason. Undue emphasis on any one of these three may lead to difficulty. Appeal to the Scriptures alone may result in the worship of the Book and the letter. Christian experience uncorrected by reason and the Scriptures may become mystic or even eccentric. And reason by itself may fail to discern the true spirit of religion. As a rational being man seeks for truth; as emotional he seeks for beauty and harmony; as moral he seeks goodness. Any true revelation to a soul must

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satisfy the entire being. Personal experience should be the goal of revelation, for that is the spiritual ideal of all true religion. To recognize an external authority is to admit that there is close spiritual affinity between the authority and the individual's experience. One may freely recognize *such* authority, for to deny it would mean to deny one's own experience. Authority and freedom meet in the reasonable interpretation of revelation through the analysis of Christian experience.

## LECTURE VIII

## THE MEANING OF PROPHECY

I. THE PERIOD OF HEBREW PROPHECY.—The prophetic period in Israel lasted approximately from 850 B.C. to 400 B.C. During that time all the great prophetic and theological conceptions of the Hebrew people, except the doctrine of immortality, were emphasized. The height of prophetic work was reached during the two centuries between and including Amos and Jeremiah. A general classification of five periods might be made. The Assyrian period lasted from about 850 B.C. to 665 B.C. Amos, Hosea, Isaiah and Micah were the chief prophets of that period. The Babylonian period lasted until the fall of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. During that time Nahum, Zephaniah, Habbakuk and Jeremiah prophesied. The period of the exile lasted until 538 B.C. Ezekiel was in Babylon at that time. During the later years of this period an unknown prophet, sometimes designated as the "second Isaiah," prophesied. Chapters forty to sixty-six of our Book of Isaiah are attributed to him. The period of restoration following the exile lasted until about 450 B.C. Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi probably did their work during these years. In the last period extending to the time of the close of the Old Testament Canon the Books of Joel, Jonah and Daniel were written.

The prophets employed many methods in their work.

Sometimes their messages were delivered by personal interview, as when Elijah met Ahab and Isaiah talked with Ahaz. Some of the earlier prophets gathered young men around them and established "schools of the prophets." These schools had been established as early as the time of Samuel, and were still in existence in Isaiah's time. Some of the prophets traveled from place to place in somewhat the same way as modern circuit riders. Others addressed crowds in public places. Still others were literary in temperament and made careful records of their prophetic utterances. The prophets frequently employed symbolic methods in teaching. Sometimes their thoughts were described as dreams or visions. Parables and figures of speech were often used. Some of the prophets performed symbolic acts to attract attention, as when Ezekiel moved his household goods in the presence of all the people. The prophets resorted to any legitimate method by which to attract the attention of the people. Thus both their words and their works became avenues of appeal.

II. SOURCES OF THE PROPHETIC MESSAGE.—There are two points of view from which to consider the work of the prophets. First of all it should be considered in its historical setting, and second in its religious significance. From a historical point of view some of the prophets were really statesmen. Their ideas were largely political. They were members of a progressive political party demanding reforms. Thus the political shaded into the moral and finally became religious. God spoke to Israel through historical events. The office of the prophet was to interpret those events.

It should be noticed, however, that as successive prophets faced different historical situations differences

in point of view on political questions arose. For instance, as interpreters of political conditions there are differences in viewpoint between Isaiah and Jeremiah. Isaiah's one message is that Jerusalem can never be shaken. It is to stand inviolable, whatever may be the political fortunes of other cities. In Isaiah's mind true religion was definitely associated with Jerusalem as a centre. Not once does he even suggest that Jerusalem may fall. However, when Jeremiah appeared political conditions had changed, and to him it was evident that Jerusalem must fall, and he expressed his opinion in no uncertain terms. To Jeremiah true religion was not necessarily associated with Jerusalem as a centre. Now in the messages of these two prophets we see how each attempted to portray his conception of true religion. In Isaiah's mind it was associated with Jerusalem as a centre. In Jeremiah's thought true religion was not dependent upon an inviolable Jerusalem. The prophets agree in their spiritual conceptions of religion, but their points of view concerning political conditions in each case are modified by historical situations. Jeremiah discerned the larger truth, namely, that true religion was not necessarily associated with a given place. As a result of Isaiah's work Israel's religious life had been purified. A spiritual nucleus had been formed. Jeremiah looked to that spiritual nucleus to vindicate his prophetic utterances concerning the permanence of religion, even though Jerusalem might fall, and the people go into captivity. We see, then, there is a common truth held by both these preachers of righteousness. They believed in the eternal character of true religion. There was also a temporal element, namely, differences in point of view as to just how this religion was to be preserved.

Thus we see how there are two elements in prophecy, one eternal and the other temporal. The truths underlying all prophecy are eternal. The ways in which those truths may be applied to historical conditions must be worked out by each prophet.

After what has been said the question as to whether the prophets were active or passive in the times of their inspiration scarcely needs to be raised. The prophets claimed to have direct communication with God, and to speak with divine authority. Yet such a claim need not obscure the normal activity of the prophetic mind. The entire passivity of the prophets was claimed by the Alexandrian Jews, who said that the prophets were utterly passive so that the Spirit of God moved upon them as a hand upon a musical instrument. It is impossible to sustain such a position. There is a human activity in all prophecy. There are certain psychological aspects of prophecy which cannot be ignored. Furthermore, a prophet is always under limitations in that he can utter no message which has not previously become a part of his thinking consciousness. Even then the form of the thought must be determined by social factors from without, and temperamental characteristics from within. A religious experience on the part of the prophet is presupposed. His interpretation of that experience becomes the basis of his message. As in all other revelation prophecy is limited on the one hand by the ability of the prophet's mind to grasp the revelation, and on the other by the ability of the people to understand its truth. There are two elements in all prophecy; one is human, and the other is divine.

III. FINAL DEFINITION OF PROPHECY.—There are two ways in which a truth may be reached: one is the

path of hard mental labor; the other is through direct intuition. In both cases the result is an immediate awareness of the validity of the truth conceived. Now prophecy is always based on moral judgments. The authority of the prophet is in the truth which he utters. In arriving at that truth the prophet must use his own mental powers. The statement that "the spirits of the prophets were subject to the prophets" represents a profound truth. The prophetic message then may be reasonable, and may have that in it which commends it to every seeker after truth. Jesus said, "He that is of the truth heareth my words," implying thereby that prophetic truth would commend itself to the hearer. The spirit of prophecy is the same everywhere. It is consistent belief in the reality of God's kingdom. Any message which seeks to interpret that truth to men may be submitted to a test. If it is found true it will abide. If it is not true no authority can make it so. The authority of prophecy is in the truth which it seeks to interpret.

Prophecy need not be a map of the future. We should distinguish carefully between prophecy and prediction. The main object of Hebrew prophecy was not to enlighten future generations, but to inspire hope in the minds of the living. The utterances of the prophets applied especially to their own times. Therefore, we must always study them in their historical setting. Subsequent events may show close similarity between prophetic utterances and what actually takes place. Again, there may be cases in which the events depicted do not actually take place. And yet again, sometimes the fulfilment of the prophecy may be far more spiritual than the prophets conceived it to be. Prophecy, then, is not to be considered primarily as direct prediction, but rather as a

broad and healthy outlook upon history and an optimistic interpretation of it. Prophecy need not be a map of the future. In fact the element of prediction seems less prominent if we remember that prophecy at its height represents the best of Israel's religious life. Biblical prediction is always along general rather than specific lines. It aims to kindle hope and awaken expectation.

The prophets were conscious of the presence of the living God. They had a profound belief in God's elective purpose for Israel. The manner in which they worked out their ideals was sometimes political, but the political always gave way to the moral, and the moral in time gave way to a grand religious view which included in its field of vision all nations. The prophetic spirit was fundamentally a passion for righteousness. It was faith in God as the source of the moral order. Morality was spiritualized and exalted as a religious duty. Such a conception of morality is healthy. Seldom were the prophets ascetic. God's ideal for his people was to be worked out in the nation's life through trial and even suffering. Such a prophetic spirit is one of the highest testimonies to the divine revelation in Israel. Prophecy, then, may be defined as the moral or ideal interpretation of Israel's national life from the standpoint of divine election. Wherever we see that spirit in any of its forms, we witness a part of the divine revelations. Hence, the authority of prophecy must be found in its eternal truths.

IV. THE PROPHETIC SPIRIT.—There is a prophetic spirit in the world. We see this supremely in Israel's prophets. We also see it among other peoples. Zarathustra of Persia, for instance, taught his people to believe in a kingdom of righteousness under the

beneficent rule of Ahura-Mazda. In the writings of Confucius the sage of China, are many passages akin in spirit and even in phraseology to some passages from the Hebrew prophets. The same may be said of India's sacred books. In Greece, too, especially in the writings of the tragedians and philosophers, there is portrayed an ideal of a moral order. Rome also had her prophets of the moral life. These and similar facts show how God hath not left himself without witness among any people. However, when we look to those nations of antiquity and compare their spiritual products with what was produced in Israel we see how the highest prophetic spirit was in Israel rather than any other nation.

The question may be asked whether the spirit of prophecy is still in the world. The answer cannot be in the negative. In the history of the Church there have been not a few who claimed direct inspiration and the power to prophesy. One of the results of this tendency was Mysticism. Another result was the denial of authority altogether. Yet in spite of much perversion of the spirit of true religion there is still a sense in which we may think of all Christian experience as having a prophetic element. There is a settled conviction in the heart and mind of every true Christian that the kingdom of God will ultimately be established in the earth. The prophets of old had the same faith, and dared to prophesy of that day when the knowledge of the Lord should cover the face of the earth as the waters cover the deep. Wherever there is such a conviction concerning the reality of God's kingdom there is the prophetic spirit. The prophets of old were called "men of God," or "servants of God" and in some cases "interpreters." There are modern men who may speak for

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God with like spiritual authority. It is the business of the modern prophet to interpret to our own day and generation the significance of religion as it may be applied to complicated modern conditions. This function of the modern prophet is not to make definite predictions concerning the future. Modern prophecy must be larger than specific predictions. It must rather be the moral and spiritual interpretation of existing conditions. Revelation is not sealed. There is the spirit of prophecy in the world to-day. It is belief in the reality and final conquest of the kingdom of God.

## LECTURE IX

## THE NATURE OF INSPIRATION

I. THE METHOD OF INSPIRATION.—There are four theories as to the method of inspiration. The traditional view is that all Scripture is inspired in such a way as to be an infallible authority in all matters of faith and conscience. The next is the mechanical theory which takes the ground that the writers of the Bible were mentally passive at the times of their inspiration. According to this view any person might have written any part of the Bible even without previous knowledge of events or ideas. This view was early condemned. The next is the theory of verbal or plenary inspiration in which the claim is made that every word of the Bible is divinely inspired. The theory of verbal inspiration must be traced to the Alexandrian Jews. They had a tradition that the texts of the ancient manuscripts was so guarded from error that when the Scriptures were translated from Hebrew into Greek the seventy scholars who did the work all produced exactly the same translation though they worked independently. When investigation showed there were many errors in translation, a further theory was advanced that God allowed the errors in order to accommodate the Scriptures to the heathen. Saint Augustine was one who believed in the inerrancy of the Scriptures, and he advanced theories to explain

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the errors of translation. Others who have believed in verbal inspiration have had to follow the same course when they faced the facts which investigation reveals concerning the formation of the canon. As support of the fact of inspiration it is urged: that the prophets had divine authority; that the New Testament acknowledges the inspiration of the Old; that Jesus treated the Old Testament as the word of God; and that Paul's claim concerning the profitable use of Scripture is a proof of its inspiration. There is a fourth position sometimes called the critical view. According to this view it is claimed that the Bible is to be regarded as religious literature of the highest order written by men in a state of religious fervor, but not in such a way as to preclude the possibility of limitation or error.

II. THE DEFINITION OF INSPIRATION.—The Scripture presents the mind and will of God to men in terms of human language. Words are vehicles of thoughts. Inspiration is the quickening of the thought. The way the thought will then be expressed will be limited by the culture and knowledge of the individual who has it. There will always be a human element in the method of uttering or writing it. Yet if the essential truths concerning man's relation to God are expressed in the language, the question of method can never overthrow the authority of the truth. It may be noted here that the apostle Paul does not claim supernatural inspiration for his epistles. He claims only to be so under the guidance of the Spirit that he writes things God can own. In some places he even makes a distinction between his own opinions and the things revealed to him. The Church Father Irenaeus attempted to account for the poor Greek of Paul by "the rapidity of his utterances,

and the impulsiveness of spirit which distinguished them." He rejected the theory of passivity. The prophets, he said, were in full possession of their powers. The Spirit assisted and clarified them. Saint Augustine said, "The language of the evangelists might be ever so different provided their thoughts were the same; the truth is not bound to the words." As a matter of fact the dogma of verbal inspiration was not set forth until the seventeenth century. If it be urged in supporting it that the separate books of the Bible are verbally inspired, no such claim can be made concerning the Councils which set forth the dogma. What Books should be included in the Canon was not decided without debate and even strife. It was several centuries before some of the Books now in our New Testament were recognized as apostolic in origin. And so it is impossible to gain anything by asserting a doctrine of verbal inspiration. Inspiration is not mechanical. It is rather a religious life in which God is active. The final authority of the Scriptures is to be found in the religious life back of it, and the religious truths it attempts to set forth.

III. THE BIBLE AS A RECORD OF REVELATION—1. *The Origin of the Bible.*—The Bible comprises the religious literature of Judaism and Christianity. The history of the formation of the Hebrew Canon is very obscure. The Pentateuch which comprises the first five books of the Old Testament is thought to have been collected and edited by Ezra the scribe or under his direction. It is certain that when he came from Babylon he brought with him the "Book of the Law." The Psalms and prophetic writings were gradually added to this. Scholars usually distinguish three canons of the Old Testament. The Law was completed about 432 B. C.

The prophetical writings were added to the Law about 200 B. C. The complete canon including the Hagiographa, or other writings, was completed by 100 B. C. In the oldest Hebrew manuscripts the consonants only were written. If verbal inspiration were to be claimed for the consonants it can hardly be claimed for the vowels. It has been shown that the vowels of the Hebrew text were an invention of a much later date, and, therefore, not written by the original authors of the text.

Investigations have also shown how the New Testament was formed in a way similar to the Old Testament. Probably the writings of the apostle Paul were the first to be collected. Not all of his writings, however, have come down to us. A little later the Gospels were added. The question arises how the Gospels were formed. Several answers have been proposed, such as: that the authors borrowed from one another; that there was a primitive Gospel which was the common source of all; that there were fragmentary documents put together differently by the different authors; and that there was a common oral tradition. Now any one of these theories may help us to understand how the four Gospels came to assume their present form. In any case it is reasonable to suppose that the men who wrote, edited or compiled the Books of the New Testament were in full conscious possession of their powers. They were, therefore, liable to errors of one form or another. In investigating the origin of the Bible it is necessary to consider all the possible human factors.

2. *The Significance of Biblical Criticism.*—There were early attempts to study the Bible from the historical standpoint. This is shown in the way some of the Fathers handled the Scriptures and debated questions

of canon. In time the dogma of inspiration obscured this free spirit. Not until modern times has there been any real freedom in a scientific investigation of Biblical problems. Criticism has for its task the tracing out of the historical steps by which the Bible came to assume its present form. As a result of this work, mainly on the part of Protestants, even the Catholic Church in the person of Newman has acknowledged the principle of development. What is known as the Modernist movement is along this same line. At the present time the idea of development is increasingly accepted everywhere. According to this principle we are to study the Bible as we would any other religious literature. Criticism may be historical, literary or textual. It is assumed that we cannot fully understand the Bible unless we know something about the history of the Jewish people, and especially the history of their language. All religious ideas, too, have a history. Criticism must investigate these things. The aim should always be to get at the historical facts. If this can be done by applying conservatively a true scientific method to the study of the Bible no true religious faith can be shaken by the findings of criticism.

3. *The Results of Criticism.*—It is well to know something about the documents we have, before using them as a basis for doctrine, even though it may be the truth of these documents cannot be shaken whatever were the methods of their composition. An absolutely inspired Book would require an absolutely inspired person or authority to interpret it. It is never claimed that the interpretation is inspired. Now criticism has shown that the Old Testament has been collected by scribes or other persons without regard to any strict

chronological arrangement. The problem of criticism is to find out the historical facts. Such investigations are handicapped at the start, for we have no strictly original manuscripts of any part of the Bible. All the manuscripts we have are copies of older texts which have been lost. The oldest we have of the Old Testament go back only to the tenth Christian century, while the oldest of the New Testament go back to the fourth century. We have absolutely no original manuscripts of any portion of the Bible. There are also differences in texts, and so the question arises as to which text is original or nearest like the original. Probably we can never know. Criticism will always have for its problem investigations along these lines. If we can never recover the manuscripts which the original authors prepared we must be satisfied with any conjecture that is not inconsistent with the spirit of Christianity itself. Negatively, criticism has shown three things: first, that the idea of verbal inspiration must be surrendered; second, that it is necessary to use reason in the study of the Bible; and third, that we all in practice make distinctions between parts of the Bible in our devotional use of it. Positively, criticism has shown: first, that the Bible is the witness to the Gospel; second, that Christ is the source of the authority of the Gospel; and third, that the religious life quickened by the study of the Scriptures is of the highest value.

4. *The Permanent Value of the Bible.*—If we cannot find in the Scriptures evidences of God's revelation we cannot find it anywhere. The Bible is a record of a long historical process. The human element in it is the consciousness of God. The evidence of the Bible's inspiration is the truth in it. The Scriptures are not without

error, but as a whole they are sufficient as a rule of faith and practice. They are simple in style. There is moral excellence in them. In spiritual matters there is an essential agreement between all writers. The Scriptures are adapted to the needs of man's spiritual nature. God has given a redemptive revelation. The Bible is a record of it. Christianity is not Bibliolatry, that is, worship of a Book. Mohammedanism wrecks itself on the Quran. Christianity, too, limits itself when it puts the Book in the place of the religious life. Christianity is not built upon a theory of verbal inspiration of its documents, but upon the reality of its facts. "We are the children of the Bible, not its slaves." The spiritual intent of the Scripture is the final authority in matters of the religious life. "Every Scripture inspired of God is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness: that every man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work."

IV. THE AUTHORITY OF THE BIBLE.—More and more our thought of the authority of the Bible has been restricted to the moral and religious realm. Stages of development are also recognized. It is sometimes necessary to distinguish carefully between the accidental and permanent. Hebrew prophecy, for instance, is a proof for all time that God had a hand in Hebrew history, but the religious value of prophecy is not to be found in the literal fulfilment of every prophetic ideal. Isaiah's ideal state has never been founded. Jeremiah's ideal of a regenerated Israel has not been realized. But the spiritual truths in these prophetic conceptions are eternal.

The final value of any part of the Bible is to be found in the eternal truths in it. If we concede any part what-

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ever to conscious human activity in preparing or transmitting the Scriptures, we open the door for possibilities of error. If it follows from this that verbal inspiration is impossible, no book can be absolutely infallible. Hence the Bible can never be an external infallible authority. There are two views as to the nature of the authority of the Bible. One is that because the Bible is God-inspired it is binding because of the very fact that it came from God. Its authority therefore, is absolute, but nevertheless external. The second view is that the authority of the Bible is in the truth which it contains. The truth in it is worthy of God. It is then the truth which is absolute in authority. It follows, therefore, that inasmuch as truth is inward the Bible has authority because it has truth. The principle of truth in us witnesses to the truth in the word of God. The authority of revelation then is to be sought in its control over the human soul.

## LECTURE X

## THE RISE OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD

**I. THEORIES AS TO THE WAY IN WHICH THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD AROSE.**—1. *Theory of an Original Revelation.*—The basis of religion is found in the power of man to think, experience emotions and perform acts of will. When man became a thinking being he looked outward upon a material world, and inward upon a mental world. Impressions from without convinced him of the reality of the physical, and impressions from within revealed the spiritual. John Fiske in his book "Through Nature to God" advances the idea that if there is nothing real to man's religious ideas the very thought of God contradicts all other types of human thought. There must be something real upon which the idea of God is founded.

Theologians have claimed there was a primeval revelation which became obscured through ignorance and sin. The Golden Age is in the past. Robert Smith expressed it thus: "Aristotle was the rubbish of Adam, and Athens the ruins of Paradise." Max Müller takes a different point of view, and argues that barbarism is not the corruption of an original revelation. The idea of God is in the mind of the savage. His fetich becomes then a symbol of "some power previously known, which power was originally distinct from the fetich, was after-

wards believed to reside in it, and in course of time came to be identified with it." But such a theory requires too mature a mind. The idea of an Infinite is in the mind of the savage in the same way as all sciences are implicit in the mind of a child. Man is in a condition of becoming. He partly is and wholly hopes to be. The truth in the theory of an original revelation is in the fact that God gave religious capacity to man. The working out of the revelation is in terms of human history.

*2. The Historical Process Involved.*—We cannot act independently of history in studying religious ideas. Wherever there is development it is impossible to understand the present without studying the past. To know what man is we must know what he has been. We must always consider the individual and the social aspects of human life. No religion can be explained apart from its social settings. If there be progress in the social order there will be progress in the religious. Even religious leaders are determined somewhat by preceding dominant religious ideas. "All visions are stamped by the stage of culture of the visionary." The survival in higher religions of ideas and rites originating in lower religions proves there has been historical connection. It is easier to see how religion has developed from the imperfect than how the perfect has become imperfect. If a perfect religion had been revealed from heaven it would not have had in it the seeds of imperfection. The imperfect, however, may strive to attain the perfect.

There are definite stages to the development. Back of the historical lies the mythical. A myth is not the product of reflection. It is social in its origin. Reflection opens the way for the purification of moral and religious

ideas. Saint Augustine said, "Go not outside thyself, for truth dwells within thy breast." The extreme position of Deism that religion is the product of man's natural powers cannot be accepted, however, unless we include in man's natural powers the Divine gift of religious capacity. There is a true light which lighteth every man coming into the world.

3. *Biblical Teaching.*—The Bible teaches that revelation is progressive, and that there are degrees in revelation. It unfolds in terms of human history. The highest revelation came through the children of Israel. Moses in the wilderness is represented as saying to God, "What is thy Name?" and the reply is, "I AM that I AM. Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you." Thus Moses became the prophet of a new conception of God. However, the revelation to Israel was limited. The author of the Hebrews speaks thus concerning it: "For if that first covenant had been faultless then would not place have been found for the second." Saint Paul also implies a progressive revelation when he says: "The times of ignorance, therefore, God overlooked, but now commandeth men that they all everywhere repent." And Saint Paul further implies that a limited revelation is given to all men: "For when the Gentiles that have not the law do by nature the things of the law, these, not having the law, are a law unto themselves; in that they show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness therewith, and their thoughts one with another accusing or excusing them. For the invisible things of him are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even his eternal power and divinity."

II. SOME TYPES OF RELIGIOUS BELIEF.—1. *Animism*.—Belief in spirits is often called animism, spiritism and fetichism. There are three theories as to the origin of religion. The first is that it arose from the desire of man to discover the causes of things. The next is that it was a practical matter in that it originated through the desire of man to secure the co-operation and help of superior beings. The third view is that it arose through belief in the continued existence of departed spirits. Animism is a result of the tendency to personalize nature. Uncivilized people accredit to animate and inanimate objects the same personal qualities which they find in themselves. In fetichism the savage thinks of a spirit embodied in a piece of wood, a stone or a charm. Prayer is made to that spirit. If the prayer is not answered the savage concludes the spirit has left the fetich. The truth of fetichism is in its spiritual idea, but fetichism does not make the idea universal. Nature worship in any of its forms can only vaguely satisfy the longing for the universal God. It is not likely we will ever solve the problem of the first dawn of religion in the human mind; nor can we say that even if it be shown that the religious development has passed through lower stages, that religion is still fetichism, animism or spiritism. However, there is a truth in even these religions.

2. *Polytheism*.—There are three phases to the natural history of religion. These are animism, polytheism and monotheism. Polytheism is belief in the existence of many gods. The gods successively represent personified magical powers, personified natural forces and personified ideals. In Greece and Rome, for instance, special deities had control over definite things such as war, the chase, the harvest, the home and so forth. In their

agriculture the ancient Romans invoked the goddess of the earth, the goddess of fruitfulness and twelve other gods and goddesses to assist in the processes of agriculture. In India the ancient gods were personified natural forces. There was also the idea of a sky god, as in Greece and Rome. In India, however, there was a tendency to believe in one God. A poet says: "They call him Indra, Mitra, Varuna, Agni: the wise name in diverse manners that which is and is One." There is a truth in polytheism. The gods represent personal qualities. This shows that the human mind has come to think of superior beings as having mental powers similar to man. The idea of the gods develops as society develops. Therefore, from this point of view, human history contributes to the development of the idea of God. The observation of nature alone could not give rise to moral views of Deity. Religion is more than intellectual curiosity concerning nature. Among people who had never heard thunder it would be impossible for an idea of a god of thunder to develop. Exactly for the same reason because there is a God who had revealed his goodness to men, human thought constructs its idea of a loving All-Father.

3. *Monotheism*.—There are definite laws in religious development. If we consider animism or something akin to it as a primary stage, the next logical step is the worship of one god as supreme. This stage is sometimes called henotheism. In that stage all gods are recognized, but only one is worshiped. Hence arises the idea of a local god. When several local gods are worshiped together we have polytheism. Monotheism is the final stage in religious development. It is belief in the existence of one God. And yet monotheism contains

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within itself many different forms. All the historic religions have suggestions of a monotheistic view of the world. In the process of development even the most immature religion will tend toward a monotheistic view.

In Greece, for instance, there was the idea of Fate or Necessity, in comparison to which the gods on Olympus were insignificant. The philosophers criticised the current polytheism and discovered a principle of unity. In India there was a time when each separate divinity was thought of as a representative of the divine. No one god claimed absolute sway in India. They all went back to the Power which made all gods. Brahm originally meant prayer, but in time it came to be identified with the object of prayer. "What is Brahm?" The answer is, "He is at one with Atman, the soul each man knows within himself." According to Buddhism Brahm is not a personal being. All human existence is "Maya" or illusion. The goal is to enter Nirvana where thought and desire cease. In China also there is the idea of a principle of unity, but Tao is not personal. Heathen thinkers, while so near the truth in their idea of One God, fail to speak with the authority of the Hebrew seers.

There are two ways in which the transition to monotheism may be made: one particular god may come to stand above all other gods and the idea of him purified; or the idea of One may develop when the divine element in all gods is discovered. The Hebrews followed the first course. Jehovah was raised from national to a universal God, and the idea of him purified. The prophets present the truest picture of God as the Universal Sovereign, and depict his moral qualities clearly. However, such purification in the idea of God was the

result of a long historical process. The Greeks had entered upon the second course in arriving at their idea of Unity. They demanded a Unity for philosophical reasons. It was the problem of the thinkers to discover some principle of unity upon which to construct the conception of the world. All monotheistic religions have appeared in historic times through historic persons. As the moral ideal has been purified in the long historical process the idea of God has been spiritualized. Jesus expressed the final truth concerning this development when he said, "God is Spirit." That is the verdict both of history and revelation.

III. THE UNIVERSAL FAITH—Polytheism may be answered from three points of view. The first is the scientific answer. The unity of the world as conceived of by science demands a unity of Cause. Secondly it is argued that as the different phases of our human activity are all the action of one human will, so we may reason by way of analogy that the manifold phases of the world's activity are the revelations of a single Divine Will. Finally, the one God we know by direct intuition is sufficient to account for these things, for if there be more than one God discord must arise. Thus the appeal to experience is shown to justify the doctrine of monotheism. Man is intuitively conscious of the one God as the source of all things which come within the field of his experience. Thus he comes to regard the one God as the Ground and Source of All.

Man learns to pray before he learns to reason. Religion is more than intellectual curiosity. Man is incurably religious. The religious nature asserts there is some Being superior to man worthy of adoration. Why should not man trust his powers in the religious life as well

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as in the scientific and intellectual? The divine origin of religion is attested by its adaptation to the deepest necessities of man. The crudest religions may contain some truth. They may be potential. They may foreshadow obscurely greater truths. But the goal is the *result* of the historical unfolding. Astronomy has grown out of Astrology, and Chemistry out of Alchemy. The Science of Comparative Religion shows how religion also has developed from humble sources. We cannot say there is not some truth in all the lower types of religion. There has been a long historical process. Even to-day we may see occasionally the outcroppings of lower religious strata. The error in us arises when we still hold unworthy ideas of God.

## LECTURE XI.

## SYMBOLISMS OF THE DIVINE

I. DEFINITION OF THE SYMBOL.—It is a psychological law that every new experience must be understood and interpreted in the light of former experiences. It is impossible to grasp an absolutely new idea. The process of reasoning is always from the known to the unknown. The steps in it ought to follow each other in such a way as to lead up gradually to the new truth. There should always be some historical connection with the past. Now this principle applies to religious experience as much as to any other. For this reason when a man has a new religious experience his first attempts to describe it will inevitably be in the form of analogies drawn from his past. The Old Testament is a record of such experiences. It does not set forth any exact theology concerning God, but the conceptions of God given in it are valuable because the symbols used suggest to our minds readily what these men of old experienced. It was necessary for the fathers to speak of God in terms men could understand. An idea expressed in other terms would not be an intelligible revelation.

It is not impossible that some of the forms of expression occasionally obscured the real spiritual idea; but every idea is imperfect at its beginning. When we go afield into animism, fetishism, polytheism or any other type of undeveloped religion, we cannot fail to see even

there, many attempts to express some thought of the divine through symbols. A myth even is an attempt to describe experience, while art in its lowest or its highest forms is a further attempt to set forth ideas symbolically. A symbol is a new bottle for new wine. It is a form in which men recast their thoughts and secure thereby a clearer mode of expression. Every religion sets forth its idea of God by symbols. In the highest of these, personal and spiritual qualities are attributed to him. The reason for this is not far to seek. By a process of analogy men of past ages have intensified their human powers and attributed the same to God. No term acquired in this process can ever describe God's character fully, but each term helps us on our way in the discovery of his nature. A symbol then is an analogy drawn from experience by which we attempt to express our thought of God.

II. SOME TYPES OF SYMBOLISMS.—1. *Symbols Drawn From Nature*.—Animism is the attributing of intelligence to inanimate objects. The savage thinks of a dual life in natural objects similar to what he finds in himself. To him all objects may have a physical and mental side. The savage thinks of a stone or a stick or other natural object as endowed with power of thought, and as possessing power to charm or to perform magical acts. Such a fetich may be either a natural or a manufactured object. The object is first selected because it is supposed to possess magical power. Our word fetich comes from the Portuguese and signifies an instrument of witchcraft. This is a very crude idea of spirit back of animism and fetichism, but we see how even here there is in germ the thought of a divine symbolized in the fetich.

Fire is another natural object which has frequently been worshiped. Fire has symbolized in some cases purity, or has been thought of as an evidence of the divine power and presence. It has also been regarded as one of the primeval elements, and as symbol of the principle of destruction in nature. The Persians regarded fire as a god, and worshiped it on the hills and in their temples. The Hindoos worshiped Agni the god of fire. Fire was also the symbol of Siva the Destroyer. In Greece the goddess Hestia was symbolized by the fire burning on the hearth. In Rome the temple of Vesta had a fire kept burning on the altars continually. Fire worship was practiced among the early Canaanites. Their god was Molech, the god of fire. In Israel also fire was sometimes worshiped, as when Ahaz according to an idolatrous custom caused his children to go through the fire.

Many other natural objects have at different times been made the objects of worship, and we can find traces everywhere of this tendency to look upon them as symbols of Deity or as signs of his presence. Thus we see there is a truth back of the imperfect symbolisms of the Divine which we see in nature worship.

2. *Anthropomorphic or Personal Symbols*.—The term anthropomorphic comes from two Greek words meaning man and form. Hence, anthropomorphism means the thinking of the gods as like unto men either physically or mentally. There are three stages in anthropomorphism. First of all, natural forces are personified. Then later magical powers are personified. Finally there is the personification of ideals. Even idolatry was an advance over animism because the idol became more and more a real symbol. The ancient

Egyptians represented their deities as like unto animals, and also under human form, or as a combination of the two. The Greeks also represented the gods as like unto men, and attributed to them personal qualities.

There are two senses in which the word anthropomorphic may be used: it may mean the attempt to represent deity under human form; or it may mean a figure of speech in which the form, actions and affections of man are ascribed to God. In this latter sense it is not irreverent to speak of God's eye when we refer to his watchfulness over us, or his arm when we mean his power, or his ear when we desire to have him hear and answer our prayers. The Psalms are filled with such figures of speech, yet no one is misled by them. In fact the tendency to use such anthropomorphic expressions is unavoidable. Owing to the psychological law already mentioned it is impossible for intelligent human beings to conceive of God other than through the interpretation of their own sense experiences. Men attribute to God in an ideal degree what they first discover in themselves. The way of progress is through man to God. Any anthropomorphic conception, therefore, may be true in so far as it does not imply a materialistic or otherwise unworthy conception of God.

3. *The Process of Spiritualization.*—Men have always ascribed to Deity, thoughts, emotions and will. In animistic religions these qualities were ascribed to inanimate objects such as fetishes. In polytheism they were attributed to man-like gods. The final stage of the process of spiritualization was reached when the notion of Deity was separated from any material or physical form. This was monotheism. After the idea of spirit was once formed it tended to separate itself from its

lower beginnings. An ethical element gradually came to the front. The way was thus opened for a complete spiritual development. At any point in this process one quality of God may have been emphasized and other qualities equally important hardly recognized at all.

There is a history back of every term ever used. For instance, the patriarchal idea of God was much more anthropomorphic than that of the prophets. There may have even been the idea of Jehovah as having form and parts. In Israel's history the making of images to symbolize Jehovah was not entirely stamped out until the eighth century, when the prophets brought about the much needed reform. However, the process of spiritualization was inevitable. The tabernacle and temple had been signs of Jehovah's presence. The Holy of Holies symbolized the heavens where He dwelt. The carved cherubims were also symbols of his presence. There are four classes of expressions used in speaking of Jehovah. "The angel of Jehovah" originally meant the form or appearance of Jehovah himself. "The face of Jehovah" signified his presence. "The glory of Jehovah" signified the manner in which he made his presence known to the prophets. The expression "the name of Jehovah" indicated Jehovah's presence to help his people. The entire history of Israel shows how the tendency to spiritualize led inevitably from a lower anthropomorphic conception to a truly spiritualized thought. In all that process the symbols used from time to time each suggest a truth concerning the divine revelation. The way was being prepared thereby for Jesus to use the highest symbolism when he said, "God is Spirit."

III. RELATION OF SYMBOLISM TO EXPERIENCE.—Truth of all kinds is presented to the mind through symbols.

Language itself is a system of symbols agreed upon to convey particular ideas. Words represent thoughts, but at best they are inexact expressions. Language is figurative. With the advance of experience a word which at one time might have described a thought becomes entirely inadequate to express a higher thought on the same subject. Such a word then cannot serve as a complete definition. If it be said, for instance, that God is a King the word King suggests to the mind the idea of God's power and authority; but that word of itself does not suggest several higher thoughts which are equally true of God. Still it is true that the symbol which was used to express the idea of God's power in a former generation suggests a truth which is true for all generations, yet it is not the whole truth concerning the character of God. The work of each age is to discover new truths which will symbolize to that generation even worthier thoughts of God than have been before discovered. A genuine symbol springs out of an immediate experience. It is really an analogy. It is a figure of speech. The Psalmist who said, "Like as a father pitith his children, so the Lord pitith them that fear Him," used such a symbolism. His experience testified to a fact which he could describe in no better language than that drawn from the highest human relationship. Such religious symbols show that men are in the presence of the highest. They also show that experience cannot be adequately described because of its spiritual depth. Any worthy symbol may, therefore, be used which will assist in portraying the facts of experience.

IV. THE VALUE OF SYMBOLISMS.—Any symbol of the divine need not be untrue because it is not the whole truth. It can become untrue only when in any sense it

is regarded as expressing the whole truth. In general it may be said that any given proposition may be the truth concerning a portion of anything, and yet not necessarily the truth concerning the whole of it. In applying this principle to the subject in hand we might say, for instance, that God permits suffering. Such a statement would be entirely true; but it does not follow that God is a Being who does nothing else than permit suffering. *The Truth* concerning God can never be expressed in any single proposition. To emphasize one truth concerning God to the exclusion of other truths may lead us to a very perverted idea of his nature. We should always guard against speaking of one quality of God to the exclusion of all other qualities.

There may be symbols taken from every aspect of human life. The choice of symbols is often determined by analogies which explain the special religious experiences of the individual. The most important events often suggest the symbol which will be used. To an excited mind it is entirely possible that an event of relatively minor importance may suggest a thought which will control the life ever afterwards. In any case an event which gets full control of the thought will stand out in experience as the symbol of a new vision of the divine. Now implicitly the idea of the divine is back of all human thought. Therefore, when words become symbols of men's thoughts of the divine it is a question of degree when the worth of one symbol is weighed against another. No one symbol represents the whole truth.

The word "Father" is the nearest to a perfect symbol of any word; but who yet knows what God's fatherhood means! The word was used before Jesus gave to it its final meaning. Other peoples than the Hebrews

had approached it, as for instance, the Hindoos in their name Dyaus-pitar, meaning heaven-father, and the Greeks in their word Zeus, and the Romans in their word Jupiter, or Zeus-pater, meaning Father Zeus. The prophets of Israel had hinted at it, as did Isaiah when he said, "Doubtless thou art our Father." This term is the last symbol reached. There had been many imperfect attempts to find a word that would express the nature of the divine being. Fatherhood is a word more vivid than any other. When Jesus used it he drew the analogy from his own experience, and so indicated the line of search which men will henceforth pursue. We should not then be misled when we use any anthropomorphic terms, for they are but human modes of describing what is true in experience. We are in the presence of the Highest when we can express our experiences of the Divine only in symbols.

## LECTURE XII

## THE PROOFS OF GOD'S EXISTENCE

There are three lines of argument usually set forth to prove God's existence. The first is the argument from the dependency of the world. The second is the argument from design. Finally, it is argued that the thought of God is a proof of his existence.

I. THE PHYSICAL WORLD IS DEPENDENT.—The world that we see is mechanical. The amount of energy is forever the same. Its form only changes. Science attempts to explain everything from the standpoint of cause and effect. A purely natural explanation of the world would attempt to do away with what we have been accustomed to designate as the supernatural. It has even been claimed that the realm of the supernatural will gradually recede as science advances. The verdict of strict science is that nature is wholly mechanical. Motion is the primary thing. From all eternity motion has been producing what we now see. Matter is real. Perhaps it is eternal. Life even is mechanical, and if men could reproduce the conditions, life might now be developed from the non-living. Science in the nature of the case only studies the physical and chemical properties of matter. Its verdict, therefore, must be limited to the mechanical.

The mechanical theory, however, is insufficient when

it attempts to carry its methods too far. If we could hold no other views than those of science we would never ask the question concerning the meaning and value of the things which science studies. The strict mechanical theory may be answered in three ways: it is impossible to explain mind as the result of matter in motion; we are conscious of the existence of mind as well as of the reality of matter; finally, it may be possible to explain the world from the standpoint of purpose. From a mechanical point of view all energy will at last become heat and all motion will cease. How could another world start itself in motion from such a condition as that? The fact is the world would long ago have ceased its motion were there not some power keeping it going. The world is continually dependent even though it is governed by law. Obedience to law includes God. The verdict of science implies purpose. God works out that purpose in an orderly way through law. Mechanical laws of themselves do not explain things. They only tell us how things take place. A strictly mechanical view can never satisfy us.

In regard to the dependency of the world we may conclude that the mechanical theory is sufficient in its own sphere. However, even that theory cannot be applied experimentally to the whole realm of nature. There are many phenomena which cannot be fully understood from a mechanical point of view. There seems to be the spontaneous in nature. Peculiar "mutations" suddenly appear in the development of life. There is also a suggestion of purpose and even of mind in nature. The religious emotion is often stirred by the glory of the outer world and the mystery of life. Religion demands the right to interpret the world in its own way,

and, if possible, to discover a purpose in it. The very changes of nature suggest the unchangeable. We are not willing to believe God's world came by chance. The method of it must be orderly. Therefore, the world must be dependent.

**II. THERE IS DESIGN IN THE WORLD.**—It is argued that the world is created for a purpose. Man sees the orderly course of the planets, the unfailing sequence of the seasons, the regular recurrence of day and night. Man also acquires a limited dominion over the forces of nature. He uses the gifts of wild nature for his food and shelter. He cultivates plants and domesticates animals. He also discovers minerals in the earth, which he applies to his own use and enjoyment. Through all of nature man thinks he sees evidences of purpose in the physical world, and this conviction is so strong that even where he cannot prove it in specific cases he still asserts there must be some purpose in it.

This argument from design is open to criticism. It is usually assumed that the Architect or Designer is external to the world. Such a Creator could exercise no real providence without breaking in at times upon the mechanical order of the world. Again, the mere fact of the existence of the created world implies but the fact that there is a Creator. It can never force us to take the further step and identify that Creator with God. We have been accustomed to start with God and designate him as the Creator; but there is logical difficulty in reversing this process. Furthermore, there are seeming contradictions in the world. A scientific proof must eliminate them. Science demands logical proof here. Religion cannot give it; yet from its own point of view religion will assert its faith in a divine purpose, even

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if it be in the greatest problem of all, the problem of suffering. We have a right to conclude there is a purpose in the world. We need not be satisfied with a strictly mechanical view. Science claims that only the fit survive. What is the origin of the "fittest?" Our answer is, God creates and sustains all. How account for the wonderful adaptations in nature if nature does not reveal a purpose. Design is exhibited in the establishment of laws. The discovery of the law reveals a larger Design. The phenomena of nature are the orderly and immediate action of an ever present intelligent purpose. From the religious point of view purposes are not affected by the method in which they are realized. Religion does not attempt to explain nature as science does, by reference to something mechanical within it, but by something other than the mechanical residing in nature or outside of nature, but always differing from it. There is a religious point of view from which to estimate the value of the laws of science. Back of all the laws of change is one unchangeable law of purpose.

III. THE MIND ASSERTS THERE IS A GOD.—It is argued that the mind trusts its own judgment in matters of science. Why should it not trust itself in matters of religion. For a man to say that he doubts that he thinks, is a contradiction, for the very doubt is a thought. "I think, therefore, I am," said Descartes. Now the highest thought a man can have is a thought concerning God. Aquinas even held that prior to all reasoning the knowledge of God is in our minds "in a confused way." Logically some knowledge of an Infinite is implied if a man speaks of himself as finite. Some knowledge of immortality is implied when a man speaks of himself as mortal. We are somehow conscious of the existence

of the Infinite. We secretly know that God exists.

There are intellectual difficulties in the proof of God's existence. It may be argued that our knowledge is only of things we see; we, therefore, cannot know what is back of the phenomena. It may be said that our knowledge of God must be relative, for as we are finite beings we can never understand what the Infinite is. We see only finite effects in the world. Science reasons back step by step, but discovers only finite causes. Religion wants to go back to a cause which is not an effect. There are limitations to this method of proof. Beginning with an Infinite we might reason to a finite, but there are difficulties in reversing the process. Science infers an endless chain of causes and effects; but the mind cannot think of such an endless series. It wants to stop even arbitrarily and say there must be a First Cause. But such a God stands in the relation of cause to effect. He is the Cause. The world is the effect. Therefore, there must in turn be a cause for God. We cannot get a logical method of proof in this way of reasoning.

The mind asserts that God exists. It is contradictory to say we cannot know God, for the very saying so implies some knowledge of him. We are intellectually obliged to assume a Universal Reason which is the Ground and Source of our own reason. Our feelings are largely individualistic. Our thoughts are more universal. We naturally think of something the greater than which cannot be thought. A human being is more than we see in any given act. So is God more than we see expressed in the creation. We infer the existence of God in the same way as we infer the existence of our fellow men. We see in other people evidences which warrant us in believing they have minds and personalities. We

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see in them something which is akin to what we find in ourselves. Yet it is true as a poet has said:

"We are spirits clad in veils,  
Man by man was never seen."

The process of reasoning which led us to believe in God is of the same nature. It is because there *is* a God who reveals his personality to us that we are fully persuaded that God exists.

### IV. THEORIES AS TO GOD'S RELATION TO THE WORLD.

—1. *Deism*.—Deism is the theory that God is separated from the world. It is claimed that nature is endowed from the beginning with the forces necessary to keep it going. Except when he performs miracles God leaves the world alone. He acts through secondary causes; while he himself is far removed from the world. According to the theory if the world were made perfect it ought to go on forever without help from the outside. If it has to be tinkered with it becomes an imperfect piece of workmanship. According to this view mind and matter are also distinct. There is pre-established harmony between them, but they are independent of each other. Their only correspondence is in the pre-established harmony by which they move along together like two clocks keeping exactly the same time in every detail. Deism is in error because it places God too far off from the world. In some way God must be found in his world. God must be present in all parts of the created Universe; but he cannot be outside of it.

2. *Pantheism*.—Pantheism is the doctrine that God is All. The East is the stronghold of Pantheism. The idea is that God is represented in everything. All deities

are parts of him. He is a "Soul of the world" which embraces within itself everything else. God's life is then present in everything. However, he is not personal because personality implies limitations. God is the unlimited. He is also unknown. Pantheism is at fault because it loses God in the world.

3. *Theism*.—Theism is belief in a personal God. It is the belief that God creates, sustains and controls the world, and is everywhere present. He is personal. If purposes are worked out in nature there is intelligence back of it. Theism holds that God is in nature, but not that nature is God. However, all nature belongs to God. Science assumes the world is a unity. It could be such a world only to a thinking Being. Therefore, God is personal. Theism is supported by the fact that the world may be understood; and by the fact that it reveals purposes. Even the idea of cause cannot be thought of apart from God. The entire Universe is the unfolding of the One Absolute God. God is in nature, but he is not nature. It is an expression of his thought. Natural laws are the ways in which the Divine Energy works. In a real sense God is in his world; yet he is superior to the world, and as such gives a personal revelation of himself to man. The self disclosure of God to and in the human soul is the supreme proof of his personality.

V. THE TESTIMONY OF EXPERIENCE.—There is a proof of God's existence to be found in experience. Coleridge expressed a profound truth when he said that the ultimate reason for belief in God is to be found in the moral and spiritual nature of man. God is in religious experience. The religious nature itself must be referred back to God. Human reason is but a form of the Divine reason. It is true our knowledge of God must be held within the

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limits of our finite understanding. We must think of God in terms of the human mind. The only proof of God's existence that will stand the test of a scientific method is the testimony of experience. It is a moral argument for God's existence. When we face the dilemma of choosing between a good God and a bad one there is but one course open. We say God is good, for the opposite is unthinkable. Kant argues that God, freedom and immortality must be facts because the moral nature demands them. In a sense there are the natural confessions of the soul which testify to a conscious or even an unconscious belief in God. God's conquest and mastery of the human soul is the supreme proof of his existence.

## LECTURE XIII

## THE DOCTRINE CONCERNING GOD

I. THE BIBLICAL NAMES OF GOD.—Three classes of names are used in the Old Testament in referring to God. These are: first, names expressing the general idea of God, such as El and Elohim; second, names describing some personal quality of God, as El-Elyon and El-Shaddai; and third, personal names of the God of Israel, as Yahweh or Jehovah. The origin of these names is prehistoric. El is a Semitic word for the general idea of God. Elohim is a plural form meaning Strength. El-Elyon means Most High. El-Shaddai means Almighty. The latter term was used by the patriarchs. The question has been raised whether the patriarchs were strict monotheists. On this point A. B. Davidson writes: "Such names as El-Elyon and El-Shaddai may not of themselves imply monotheism, inasmuch as One Most High, or Almighty, might exist though there were minor gods; yet when a people worshiped only one God, and conceived him as Most High, or Almighty, the step was very short to monotheism." In the time of the prophets and later, the word Adhonai meaning Lord was substituted for Yahweh, for the Hebrews regarded Yahweh as a name too sacred to be pronounced. Jehovah (Yahweh) was the personal name of the God of Israel.

II. THE BIBLICAL IDEA OF GOD.—The patriarchs conceived of God as a personal Being. The first terms used in describing him show that God was regarded as superior to all other divinities. The patriarchs frequently spoke of God as we would speak of a superior personage. God walked in the garden; he looked down to see the tower, and so forth. God was thought of as near to men and interested in what they were doing. There was even the idea of God as localized. Jacob was surprised to discover God at Bethel, and so set up a stone as a memorial. But the patriarchal idea of a local God is a limitation to his spirituality. Moses had a truer view. He was the great religious leader who gave to the people the spiritual idea of Jehovah.

The prophets were the true spiritual leaders of Israel. From the time of Moses until late there was a struggle between idolatry and monotheism. Elijah faced such a condition. He cried, "If Jehovah be God serve Him, if Baal, serve him." After Elijah's work the cause of monotheism was strengthened. The patriarchs thought of God as a local Deity. The prophets taught that God's kingdom was universal. God was frequently spoken of as King. Jehovah was the God of Power. He loved Israel, the elect people. He also governed all other nations. Amos declared: "Have I not brought up Israel out of the land of Egypt, and the Philistines from Caphtor, and the Syrians from Kir?" Jeremiah even called Jehovah the King of the Nations: "Who should not fear thee, O King of the Nations—Jehovah is the true God: He is the living God, and an everlasting King." Other prophets suggested similar ideas.

The popular conception even at the time of the prophets was that Jehovah was a national God. After

the prophetic period the spiritual idea of him predominated. However, development along another line took place. Jehovah who was so real to the prophets gradually came to be thought of as transcendent. In time there arose an almost superstitious dread even of his name. It was never spoken. "He who names the name shall be killed." The word Jehovah was avoided altogether, and the term Adhonai substituted for it. This shows how the sense of God's immediate presence was lacking. God was thought of as far away from the world, and so holy in character that even his name could not be pronounced. Philo, a Jewish philosopher living just before the Christian era, even taught that God was so far away as to be unknowable and unapproachable except through angels and other semi-personal beings. Truly there was need of another prophet.

The clearest Biblical doctrine of God is given us in the New Testament. Jesus expressed it in a single word, Father. There is an Old Testament basis for the idea of God's fatherhood. Jesus accepted that, but carried the idea to its completion. The main concern of Jesus was to tell us what God does, and so he revealed the character of God as related to human life. In speaking of God Jesus used only two terms. He called him King and Father. The latter was the more important. He declared that God was his Father, and also the Father of all men. Jesus placed emphasis upon the possibility of experience whereby a man might know in his own soul that God was his Father. This is the highest Biblical doctrine of God. It is this thought of the Divine Fatherhood that is bound to transform the world.

III. THEOLOGICAL TERMS USED IN SPEAKING OF GOD.—  
1. *Omnipresence*.—There are three stages in the develop-

ment of the idea of God. God is thought of as like unto one of us, a big man. God is thought of as man-like and king-like. Finally he is conceived of as Spirit. Omnipresence means that God is everywhere present. Through the operation of physical forces, in all natural events, and in the still higher operations of thought God is present. Nothing exists that God is not there. He can pour forth his energy in any place and in all places at once. He is not an absentee God. If he could not be everywhere he could not be a true God, for a true God must be right at hand all the time. It is then man's privilege to see God's handiwork in all physical events; and to think God's thoughts after him in the interpretation of nature; and more than that to know God in terms of human experience. There is no other life in which in a physical sense we can be nearer God than we are now. In him we live and move and have our being. He is Omnipresent.

"Closer is He than breathing,  
And nearer than hands and feet."

2. *Omniscience*.—Omniscience means God's perfect knowledge of all that is or can be. God is the thinking Spirit present at all times in all his works. He may know objects as distinct from each other in time and space, but not as distant from himself. God does not learn through experience as we do. He knows all things at once. The question of foreknowledge comes up here. Does God absolutely foreknow what will come to pass, or has he created a world he cannot control, and in which things will come to pass he could not foreknow. We limit the creative power of God if we say

he could not create such a world. We limit the foreknowledge of God if we say he has created a world concerning which he does not absolutely foreknow all things. If God foreknows it may seem to follow that what we call freedom is an illusion. It is possible to say God foreknows, but that the foreknowledge does not imply foreordination. Thus man's freedom will be assured. However, it is difficult to conceive of a Holy God foreseeing an eternal condition of suffering or of sin, and then freely creating such a world. Whatever Omniscience may mean it can never mean anything inconsistent with God's nature.

3. *Omnipotence*.—God has all power. Omnipotence means that all separate causes in the Universe must be referred ultimately to God. The Creator has full control. He is Sovereign. His power is exercised everywhere in the Universe. The conception of Omnipotence becomes even grander than ever when science interprets all physical phenomena from the standpoint of Energy. God is that Energy. However, God's power in a sense is limited. God cannot create a world in which two and two make five. Omnipotence is limited by reason. God cannot do anything that is logically self-contradictory or morally evil. He cannot deny himself. A child once asked, "Can God create a stone bigger than he can lift?" In answer, if we say God can create a stone bigger than he can lift we limit his power to lift. If we say he can lift any stone he can create we limit his power to create, implying that he cannot create a stone bigger than he can lift. From either point of view God's Omnipotence is limited from within by his rational and moral nature. The true idea of Omnipotence means that God is all-powerful to meet the needs of the Universe he has

created. God is able to do all rational and righteous things. He can do no irrational or evil thing.

**4 and 5. *Immanence and Transcendence.***—Properly speaking Immanence and Transcendence mean God is within or God is without. An immanent God abides in his world. A transcendent God is above or outside of the world. Alexander Bruce expresses the idea thus: "An immanent Deity may be thought of as imprisoned within the world, and the transcendent Deity as banished from his world." If we cannot accept the position of Deism that God resides in the heavens far away, and if we hesitate to accept the position of Pantheism that God is impersonal, there is but one other course open for us. We must accept the position of Theism that God is immanent in the world as a personal Being, Omnipresent, Omniscient, Omnipotent, but that He is a Spirit greater than the Universe and in that sense far transcending it. Immanence means that God is self-revealing, and that he discloses himself in the world. It implies also that the world is ultimately spiritual, inasmuch as God is present everywhere. Transcendence means that God in his nature is never to be confounded with the created world. He is rather the Ground and Source of it.

**IV. THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD.—1. *God is a Person.***—The question as to what are the attributes of God resolves itself for a Christian into the question, what does religious experience reveal? By the same method by which we learn *that* God is, we learn *what* he is. God has set eternity in our hearts. If we attribute personality to God, that means that we conceive of him as a self-conscious self-determining Being, having thoughts, emotions and a moral nature. We are compelled to think of God in terms of personality. If there be

anything higher than personality we could never know it, for we can only within the limits of our experience attribute to God in the highest conceivable degree what is true or ideal in ourselves. God is eternally what man hopes to be. God is Spirit. What is ideal in man is real in God. His personality is Real.

*2. God has Moral Attributes.*—Prof. Clarke regards two moral qualities as supreme in God. These are holiness and love. In the early dispensation the emphasis was upon the former, and in the Christian dispensation the emphasis is upon the latter. In the Old Testament God's action is never represented as inconsistent with his holiness. Moreover, holiness becomes the moral standard for all beings capable of a moral life. "Be ye therefore holy, even as your Father in heaven is holy." Holiness stands forever in opposition to sin. Righteousness and justice flow from it. Love, which is the highest quality in God, is shown supremely in his desire to impart his own holy love and nature to all other conscious beings. Love, therefore, is the highest quality in God. It is the basis of holiness, righteousness, justice, mercy and any other character worthy of God. Jesus revealed the final character of God's love when he taught that God is Our Father.

God reveals his nature through Jesus. By direct intuition Jesus was conscious of himself as Son and God as Father. The one word Fatherhood expresses the thought of Jesus concerning God. If we say that attribute is eternal, it follows that the divine plan for man's salvation was no afterthought on the part of the Creator. God's love is therefore universal. Even the common mercies of our lives are the gifts of God's great love. Calvin said: "God is manifested to us by his virtues, and

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when we feel their force and vigor in us, and enjoy the goods which come from them, there is reason enough that we should be touched to the quick by such apprehension rather than imagining a God far from us." Thus our experiences may confirm the confession of Jesus. From this point of view we all believe Jesus to be God's Son. In his own thought of God, in his spiritual conceptions of God's nature, and supremely in his own moral and spiritual life we believe that Jesus was all a true son of God would be. Jesus was conscious of Sonship. He said God is Father. Therefore, it follows that God is Love. Of what higher revelation of the character of God can we conceive?